

BLUE

RIBBONS.



Sewis, Martha Sewis (Beckwith) Euell

BIRD RIBBONS,

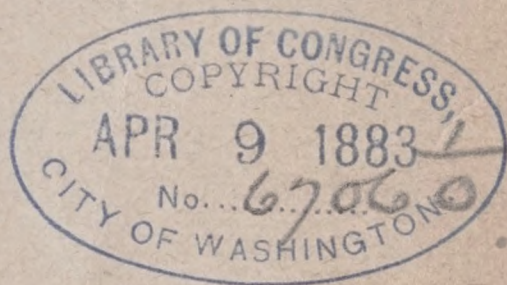
By

*The author of "Harvest of Years," "Lovette," "Trify,"
Maid of Copp's Cliff," "Papa's Madcap," &c., &c.*

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TO MY PUBLISHER.

You say I "ought to write a preface," and I do not deny the propriety of the remark, but I am not enamored of prefaces.

I abominate them, especially when obliged to write one, and the reason is plain ; I do not know what to say.

If it is expected of me to beg pardon for taking the time of the reader, I am in no condition to do it, for the book is purposely printed, and I desire it read.

In the case of BLUE RIBBONS, the matter was written to please myself, and while I am glad to admit, [what we all know is true,] that the pen of a "Dickens" could have done greater justice, and perhaps should have drawn pictures of the real characters whose experiences fill these pages, the task has nevertheless fallen to me. I have done the work as well as I could ; you desire to publish it, and now what can I say that is interesting to those who propose to read it ?

It appears to me like keeping one on the doorstep, reading the name on the doorplate, when the fact is they desire to see the occupant of the house.

I do hope the reader will become interested in my friends, but if they do not, it may be an incentive to another and different labor ; therefore I must preserve silence, accept my fate, and also beg your pardon for not having sent you a smoothly written insinuation of excellence, breathing the polished hope of a majority of prefaces.

Very Sincerely Yours,

THE AUTHOR.

BLUE RIBBONS

CHAPTER I.

PLEASE to walk in, Jane, if you're a going to stay, for my lame ankle gives me a powerful sight of pain when I stand. I'm free to say you're welcome."

"Excuse me," said I, stepping inside at once, "I am unpardonably forgetful of your lameness," and I took the chair Mrs. Chubbuck offered, feeling glad to get once again into the presence of the dear, old lady, whom I had known since childhood, the one whose arm had lain around me when mother died, as her kindly face looked into my tear-filled eyes, and blessed comfort fell from her lips.

"Have hope, dear child, and remember as long as Charity Chubbuck lives, you may depend on her for a friend, and a home, too, if you have no better place offered to you." The world held for me no relative nearer than cousins and uncles. A place I should have, for I was not left penniless, but a *home*, ah! never again, and in the months that succeeded my bereavement no place was so pleasant to me as this same little sitting-

room, where to-day, as in the days before, waited the wooden rocker with its home-made cushions, filled with hens' feathers, and covered uniquely with bits of different colored flannels set together in box-work, and adorned with polka dots in green and gold.

To me it was as handsome as Paris embroidery, and, as I seated myself, over me fell the same old feeling of happy security which helped me through the dark days of the past.

"I am sorry you are so lame, Mrs. Chubbuck," I said.

"Well, its been a long road, this rheumatiz trouble, and, you see, the older I grow the less life there is in me. My joints are all dretful bad, they're flat and stiff, and the doctor says there's no help for it, for the oil-bags are all dry that feed them. I expect it is so, still, I have so little to do I can get along, and just now I've got company."

"Which makes it pleasant, but am I to be turned out of the synagogue? I have dreamed of a week of perfect rest with you."

"No, no, Jane; you can stay and you'll like her so much. I'll call her," and stepping to the stairs which led directly into to the back chamber, she called, "Violet, come down."

“In a moment,” was the silvery response, and, in less time, she stood before me, with a pale, sweet face, framed in long, loose curls; her form slight and willowy, clad in blue muslin, and around her shoulders, shrouding a neck and arms, which, although pleasantly shaped, were too thin for beauty, she wore a worsted shawl, whose color rhymed exactly with her dress, and made her look like a bit of blue crowned with an earnest, expressive face.

Taking in the pleasant picture, and noticing her quaint salutation, which came naturally and sweetly from her lips: “Are you going to stay at Apple Rest a while?” I loved her in a moment, and answered spiritedly:

“Indeed, I am, whether the Gods are willing or not. I shall enjoy it more for your being here, Miss Leavitt.”

“Call her Violet,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, “she likes it better than Miss Leavitt. Don’t you, Violet?”

“Certainly, I do, the other seems too stiff, and is illy suited to a little girl like me.”

“Too little she is, Jane; just look at her hands, they look more like bird’s claws than anything else. I do hope she’ll get some flesh on her bones; she is small-boned like her mother, and I remember when she wasn’t any bigger than Violet, but,

good land, she weighs one hundred and seventy pounds good to-day, and has done no end of work in her day.

“Her first husband was a shiftless fellow, a tailor by trade, and forty years ago, when they were married, he had a good farm and everything for a good start; four men on the bench to work for him; and they come for miles 'round to be measured and fitted; he was the best tailor in the country, but the temptation to laziness that he inherited from three generations back would stick its head out, and the fair weather sailin' only helped it along, and when, after a few years, his love of new rum and hard cider crept along to lock arms with laziness everything was as good as killed.

“Mercy, how the rails fell around the pasture, and in less than two years the place looked like a dragged-out centurion, (centennarian she meant,) and Violet's mother, poor thing, with her spunk and work stuck to the wreck till her fifth child was goin' on seven years, and then she left him, for she couldn't get another meal to save her life there, and seven years after leaving him she married Violet's father, a steady-going, honest man, who works along by the side of her, and they'll be prospered, I know,” and Mrs. Chubbuck wiped

her spectacles preparatory to picking up the magazine I had brought her, in whose pictures I knew she would be interested.

Violette had sat during the recital with apparent unrest; she was a sensitive, nervous girl, and although there were no reflections cast on her by the story told, still I knew her nature was such that she never would have pulled aside the dead leaves that covered the skeleton of the past, and I began at once to talk of the blossoms which were falling all about "Apple Rest," as she had aptly named it.

The house always seemed to me the embodiment of rest, and in the long winter evenings when I sat with Mrs. Chubbuck before the fire place, my sorrows went upward with the flames, and comfort grew in the glowing coals, and like them lived, through the night of my discontent, under the ashes, to wake with the morning dawn, at the touch of a friendly hand. This home was surrounded on three sides with thriving apple trees, whose fruitage was both full and fair, looking as if by chance some stranger hand had dropped a human nest among the odor of apple blossoms, to woo sweet rest and peace, and this name of Violet's seemed a most becoming title.

Violet was an easy, graceful talker, and while

Mrs. Cubbuck was reading the tales which the pictures told her, we talked of flowers, birds, poetry and music.

Her blue eyes were filled with changing light, and when she repeated some verses of Felicia Hemans, I had no doubt in my heart, that the dreamy far-off look which filled her eyes bespoke the poetry of her nature, and I thought "if she lives, she will be of importance to the world;" but she looked so frail, a chill ran over me, and I almost knew she would die, like all who are so pure and beautiful.

At this moment three loud raps on the door leading to the little side verandah caused us all to jump, and before I could respond to the call for entrance, and thereby save Mrs. Chubbuck a step, the door opened, and an awkward youth entered, closing the door after him with a threatening emphasis.

"Oh! George," said Mrs. Chubbuck, "is this you?"

He put both hands in his pockets, and standing before us, with his hat still on his head, answered slowly:

"It is I, be not afraid;" then clearing his throat, he drew up his shoulders in a peculiar way, as if to make some terrible announcement.

“Have a chair, George.” He bowed his head, as if in partial disparagement of the invitation, and said, “I know enough to sit down if I want to”—another awkward silence ensued, and at last he spoke.

“My respected friend, I have come to impart to you the saddening intelligence that the comfort of my literal presence must be dispensed with; I am about to withdraw; to leave this town of my nativity.”

“Going away, George; what for?” I shall miss you more than almost anyone else. Where are you goin’?”

A smile curved the corners of his mouth, and another peculiar shrug of his shoulders, preluded an answer, as deeper into his pockets went his hands, the working of whose restless fingers was plainly distinguishable.

“True to the feminine instinct, your sentence contains three distinct parts, the intermediate one, being the most salutary of the three, I must attend to that first and render my gratitude for the friendliness which prompts you to say I “shall be missed.” “I am exceedingly glad that you appreciate my undiluted friendship, for one who is an honor to her sex,” and taking a long breath, he threw back his head and looked to the ceiling,

as if in search of another mode of expression; presently his eyes fell, and he continued :

“And now the two questions which you propounded, must be answered; but Mrs. Chubbuck, I forgot to eat my dinner to-day, and a bowl of bread and milk would be most grateful.”

“You certainly shall have it, George ; but how on earth did you manage to forget your dinner?”

“Oh! that was just no trick at all. I had a problem in my head, and when my forenoon’s work was finished, I worked it out on the barn floor, and the loss of my dinner did not occur to me till this very moment ;” and while I was wondering what manner of an individual he was, Mrs. Chubbuck was getting the bowl of bread and milk.

He took a chair near the table, on which she sat a large yellow bowl filled with rich creamy milk, and beside it a wooden trencher of considerable size, filled with appetizing slices of rye bread and some home-made doughnuts.

I almost envied him the repast. He bowed graciously, and invited Violet and myself to partake with him, saying, if we could “hunt around among the dishes and find two bowls of lesser size, he would share the wealth of the lacteal fluid, and rejoice.”

We, of course, declined, and taking his hat from

his head as carefully as if it were very precious, set it under the table, on which he placed both his hands; and with a comic air bowed low his head, and uttered a guttural "amen," which caused merry laughter we could not suppress, Mrs. Chubbuck joining with us in a quiet way; she was evidently well acquainted with the hero, who to us was a marvel.

Our laughter was increased, when with an unlucky move of his limbs, the hat he had so tenderly removed from his head, was upset, and a motley mass of papers deposited on the floor.

"Hurrah! there," he cried, "the very dickens and all."

I sprang to the rescue and gathered them up for him, placing his hat on a stand, instead of where it might again be upset, for which I received a compliment, and I really began to enjoy the strange visit.

"Well, I must eat slowly, since that is conducive to health, and I will endeavor to answer those two questions. Let me see, you asked me where I am going, and why I go. First, I go to the metropolis of the country to enter upon the duties of a clerk in the grocery store of Ephraim Crane, a tolerably good man I think, but not the place I desire by any manner of means, "and with a furtive

look at Violette and myself, as if he would rather not have us hear, he added, "the man sells liquor, but perhaps I can reform him."

I leave these hills and valleys because I desire to be in the shadow of a library, where I can borrow books, or pay a nominal sum for their use, since I am too poor to buy, and losing time daily. I am almost as big a fool as my father, and he is determined I shall supplant him in lack of knowledge. I tell you, Mrs. Chubbuck, I am alone and single-handed, and I must crawl on my knees and beg for the bread of knowledge I so hunger for."

"How old a man is this Mr. Crane?"

"Fifty, or thereabouts, I should judge, portly and evidently not abstemious, but a lover of condiments and unnatural living; the wrong habits of men are going to ruin the world; literally ruin us all;" and he groaned in despair, biting at the same time into one of the motherly doughnuts.

"You have been talking about books, George; I meant to tell you before this, that there are some books in our garret, left by Mr. Chubbuck. I put a box full up there after he died, and never have looked at them since. I don't want them and nobody will prize them as much as you. I guess you had better have them now. Violet or Jane will go up with you; my ankle keeps me from going over

the stairs, but the land knows there's need enough of it, dirt an inch thick all the way."

" 'The old cat and all her kittens,' I shall be in town after all ; which of these girls is to go with me ? "

" I will go," said Violet, rising, and the last half of the doughnut vanishing, they were off in-
stanter.

" Who is he," said I, when they were fairly on the stairs ?

" His name is George Bean, one of the best souls in the world ; but so set on learnin', that if he gets a book in his hand, or a problem in his head, it seems as if he was dead to everything and everybody. He started for meetin' about a month ago, and just as he got within a stone's-throw of the meetin'-house, some idee about figgers come into his head, and he stopped by " Aaron's Rock," as we call the old stone in front of where Aaron Downing's house used to be, and marked out the figgers, in his head, with chalk ; and when I come out of meetin', I see him settin' there with his hat off, and lookin' as melancholy as if he'd stole a goose, and I went up to ask the trouble. The rock was completely covered with figgers, and he looked up with a sickly smile at me, muttering something about an apostrophe, I thought, and I said ' George,

what ails you?" He jumped up as if I'd shot him, and running his fingers through his hair, almost screamed out, "That is correct—triangles are just what we want; now I'll go on to meetin'."

I laughed till tears run down my face, and told him the sermon on the mission of Christ was over, and everybody goin' home. He was mightily set back, but put on his hat and started along home with me, saying, 'Well, never mind, I guess I shall get to the celestial city in good season, nevertheless.'

His father is bound to make a farmer and a cobbler of him, and the poor fellow has had an up-hill row to hoe, so far as books and schooling. I am really glad for him, he is going away, though the people round here say he's fit to teach the school at the foot of West Mountain, and I wish he could have it, and get good pay. I shall miss him, for every deep snow since Nehemiah died, has found him here digging paths all around for me.

We sat a full hour waiting for the two explorers to appear with the books, and at last Violette came down alone, her face glowing with enthusiasm.

"Where is George," said Mrs. Chubbuck?

"Oh! he is going crazy over his windfall; he has only looked at three of the books, and one was an English Reader; he said he had one, but he

might lose it, and needed two; wished he could have two of everything.

He reads beautifully. I wish you could hear him. I sat down on an old tea chest, and listened intently, forgetting we were staying so long; but he will not come down at present. His eyes are like two stars; he is the nicest young man I ever saw, and his soul is as white as snow; I wish I had power to help him; he ought not to have one bit of care; and it is too bad he must work for the plain fare he asks in this world. I could almost cry for him; but I must not stop to do that now, for you will be singing, "Violet, put the kettle on;" I am Mrs. Chubbuck's help just now, she said, turning to me with a naive smile, and apparently understanding the management of affairs, flitted out of the room singing "Blue Eyed Mary."

Supper was on the table, cream toast and be-frizzled beef, dainty bits of cheese on an old-fashioned glass cheese plate, rye bread cut in thin slices and laid temptingly near a creamy butter roll, some patty cakes and doughnuts. Oh! what a refreshing sight was that supper table to me, coming, as I did, from boarding school, where for five long years I had taught.

We were ready to sit down, only waiting for the coming of George Bean, who came at last with

his arms full of books, the personification of human happiness ; he looked so differently, I should hardly have recognized the awkward youth in the bright eyed young man, who, with a wonderfully melodious combination of verbs and adjectives, rendered thanks for Mrs. Chubbuck's gifts, and almost gracefully accepted a seat at the table. I shall never forget that supper, which was a perfect feast to me in more than one sense.

A white winged day seemed my solitary week at Apple Rest, just sweet and pure enough to give me an appetite for more, and inasmuch as I had engaged to go back to teaching, afforded me an opportunity for exercising patience, and *exorcising* tears and regrets.

Violet Leavitt was my principal study ; long talks and rambles together, brought me in close contact with her nature, and I marvelled constantly that I found so little in her that was common to others of my acquaintance.

She seemed so perfectly good all through, as Mrs. Chubbuck phrased it—"no whited sepulchre about her ;" and her spirit in its pureness filled the earthly tabernacle so completely, that every look and action reflected the innate purity ; yet with all this refreshing innocence, which covered her as a perfect shield, there was great strength

and a charming originality of expression, which made her like an ever changing picture. If aroused, her indignation at any evidence of unprincipled acts was powerfully expressed ; and upon all general subjects she was posted, held not only by the beautiful thoughts which rose like tides within her to fall from lip or pen, but interested in matters concerning life's every day problems, and sat often at Mrs. Chubbuck's side kitting her shoe thread stockings, and talking of prospective crops with as much interest as if she were a farmer's wife, and had a large brood of children to care for.

She had queer ideas concerning names and insisted on naming me Millicent ; said it suited me exactly, and when she shortened it to Millie it became a musical title, and I acquiesced in her selection.

“ Good bye, Millie, let me kiss you once more ; come back soon, poor Millie ; how you hate to leave us ! ”

“ I do, indeed, ” said I, and gathered her close to my heart ; then kissed the comely cheek of my good, old friend, who whispered, “ Come back if you can fix it, ” and turned away with that poor, worn-out travelling bag of mine to walk alone the half mile between Apple Rest and the railway station.

It takes little time to alter one's opinion of men and conditions when a full blaze of light comes in contrast with a glimmer, and when I got back into my pleasant room at school and greeted the bevy of girls fresh from home and vacation holidays, over it all came the picture of Violet at Apple Rest, and the third day after my arrival, I wrote to Mrs. Chubbuck just these words: "May I come and stay with you always?"

I had an answer in four days, written by Violet, and saying I might come by telegraph, trunk, carpet bag and all, and I went.

Perhaps, I did not consider whether I might not be of service there at Rose Seminary, and it might have been better for the world had I done so, still the world has never grumbled at it in the least, and I, well, I was consulting my own desires—and no respect for the brief school term, through which I was expecting to serve—the one week of spring vacation had proved too great a temptation, and my comfortably filled purse helped me to the sequel. Jennie Grey, who came to take my place, was poor and needed the work, and upon this fact I quieted my conscience.

Violet was at the station to meet me, and I was sorry—she felt it, and regretted her coming. I loved her too well to meet and kiss her before

the merciless crowd of wonder-seekers, that forever were loitering about this station, which was on the line of the Albany road, and where all Canadian passengers changed cars.

Domiciled for life in the south-west chamber, which was allotted to me, Mrs. Chubbuck took me for better or worse, and the birds went right on singing as if nothing strange had happened, and, likewise, the right arm of the brook, which, two miles and a-half from Apple Rest, turned the old grist mill, and on its way down stopped to sing in the woods, and stretched lovingly across the orchard on the east of the house, and, being appreciated, was turned to good account, and kept a basin of stone well-filled with pure and sparkling liquid.

In this delightful spot I fell into and out of existence, and now, for the sake of telling about others, I desire to cover myself up in apple blossoms and remain as if the pronoun *I* had not once been spoken.

CHAPTER II.

I HAVE a letter from George Bean," said Violet, delightedly. "A good, fat letter, too, but do, for pity's sake, read the superscription, Mrs. Chubbuck."

"MISS VIOLET LEAVITT,

"Sojourner with good, old

"MRS. NEHEMIAH CHUBBUCK."

"That is exactly like him, Violet; no one ever saw such a queer boy," and she laughed heartily and arranged her spectacles for a long look at the well covered envelope, saying: "Do read the letter loud if you will; I want to hear how he gets on."

"So be it," said Violet, and in clear, full tones and with earnestness she read:

"I, George Bean, now a sojourner in the metropolis of Duke County, whose name it bears, give greeting to my new-found friend, Violet Leavitt, in whom I am well pleased, and to my old and highly esteemed well-wisher, Charity Chubbuck, widow of good, old Nehemiah, whose death will never cease to be lamented.

“Sisters : I remember the promise which I made you, and since it is one of my strongest convictions that he who promises should ever fulfill, refusing to annul even the slightest contract to which his word is given, I sit here in my attic room, (12 x 15 feet in dimensions, and large enough for me to sleep in at least, since being always sober there is no fear of my hitting my head against its sloping sides,) and by the light of a single candle, thread my way over the paper whose lines can hardly be seen distinctly.

“My eyes are tired, for I have read two hours since closing the store, and it is now midnight.

“My situation here is neither utterly deplorable or enviable. The man I work for is a good natured sinner, who buys his potatoes by one measure and sells them by another, and although the latter is smaller and tends to make the stock last longer, I have contrived to lose it, and hardly think it can be found—so much for that.

“He obliges me to deal out the accursed drams which people persist in buying, although they know it will ruin both soul and body. I content myself for the present with reading them all a lecture on being temperate, and the hope of being able to reform some of them makes partial reparation for my unjust position, which is only one

proof among thousands of the slavery we are obliged to endure.

“This city is a cess-pool of iniquity, not full by any means, since its population is now only 28,500, and the area it occupies determines its inevitable growth; rum and its horrors skirt its southern limit, and I watch nightly for some poor sot whom I may lead to his home, rather than see him abused by being arrested by the very law which permits him to buy his liquor at any corner. If I see a rich man drunk I let the police attend to him, but the poor ones I must help, since imprisonment and fine only render it harder for their wives and families.

“My pockets are full of pledges, and I enclose one, hoping to see it filled with the names of the old soakers when I come again. The young, white face of my new friend, whose eyes, I suppose, are responsible for her name, will be a mute appeal which few can resist, and, armed with a pledge, she will do much good. See to it that this is not neglected.

“God has done enough for this city to make it beautiful in his sight, and acceptable as a blessed gift to man, but the success of its merchants and manufacturers is to me a direful omen. It forebodes a perfect moral apoplexy.

“The books Mrs. Chubbuck gave me are precious friends, whose lives will become identical with my own.

“If you have time, and can confer with me through correspondence, your missives will be sunbeams along the road, and cheer the path of a fellow traveller.

“I had intended bringing up some hemlock boughs for Mrs. Chubbuck, to use as a specific for rheumatism—they are efficacious. The proper way to use them is to steam the parts afflicted.

“Yours, for the redemption of man.

“GEORGE BEAN.”

“What does he say about the apoplexy? I should think it was unhealthy there, Vilit.”

“Oh! it is a moral apoplexy; he means that they are so prosperous in business, they will forget to do good as it comes along, losing in the possession of the bright gold they covet, the higher aims and purposes of life.”

“Well, that is just the same everywhere, I guess, but nobody would ever think of calling that general complaint the apoplexy;” and while the old lady sat pondering upon the strange and well prized friend, Violet hastened to the little cherry stand in one corner of her room, to obey a

loving impulse, and write a good, long letter in reply. It read just like her :

“MY DEAR FRIEND, MR. BEAN,

“Yours of —— was received only an hour ago, and since I feel impelled to write you, I will not try to crowd back the impulse, but go right along talking to you just as if you were here beside me.

“Mrs. Chubbuck is delighted at hearing from you, and we will try and find the balm in hemlock of which you so kindly speak.

“We are anxious to prescribe a different business for you, and a more comfortable room ; one which is nearer earth than your present lofty condition. It is a shame for an honest man to be subservient to the will of one who is not only mentally inferior, but morally dwarfed also. I cannot believe you will stay there long, and Mrs. C. has been talking with Deacon Rayne concerning the school in this district. He is desirous of your having it, and when the present term expires, we trust the fates will bring you hither.

“As for me, I am to be Mrs. C.’s right-hand assistant, a sort of Lieut.-General (or in general as you prefer.) My parents are going to the West, on an extended visit to father’s old friends, and I

am, by choice, to remain during their absence, in "Apple Rest." Millie Dean is with us as a boarder. She is growing literary, that is to say, she is literally good for nothing except newspaper hunting, writing profusely in her diary, whose dimensions suggest an encyclopædia, and then for a diversity, she begs me weekly to go to the graveyard with her, and sit forlorn on table tombstones while she copies at length the queer inscriptions, and now and then she prefaces them with a copy of the grotesque figures supposed to represent angels. The wings come right out from behind the ears, and I cannot accept them as a divine pattern. If I am to look like that, I never want to be an angel.

"I wish you were here to night to read to us, or quote some of your favorite sayings from Pope, for although I am a moral delinquent, and lazy beside a worker like yourself, still I do appreciate your spirit of justice, and shall be always your friend.

"We shall call on your parents this week if nothing unforeseen happens to prevent.

"With much respect for your every sentiment of right, I remain,

"Your true friend,

"VIOLET."

“P. S. About the pledge-signers, I can hardly tell you whether I shall accomplish anything in that direction or not, since I am a stranger to nearly all the town people.”

Mrs. Chubbuck asked the privilege of reading it, and evident satisfaction sat smilingly upon her face, as looking after Violet, who tripped gaily off to the office with her letter, she said, “I wish Nehemiah was here with us, he’d have gone crazy delighted at Vilit’s sunshiny ways and sprightly talk.”

The correspondence thus entered upon was appreciated by both parties, and every week brought a letter to Violet and carried one to George Bean.

Temperance lectures at the bar did not have the salutary effect that the young philanthropist desired, and the days grew no brighter, as his letters all testified. Still, he was brave and manly, and not until the last straw came that broke the camel’s back, (according to Mrs. Chubbuck) did he signify his intention of leaving.

It was just before the summer school term closed, that a letter came, which caused Violet to exclaim “He is coming, Blue Ribbons is coming!

Leave the crullers you are making;
Leave the pies that you are baking,

For I tell you, Mrs. Chubbuck,
True Blue Ribbons will appear :
Ah ! the Gods of love are singing ;
Promises of hope they're bringing,
To our hearts while time is winging
Our George Bean, truthful mortal,
Soon will cross our home's dear portal,
Truths to teach that are immortal."

"Vilit, what on earth possesses you ; be you a making them verses on George's account ? Set down, my child, you'll get the hysterics ! I'll wash my hands, and get a pinch of snuff, and listen to your reading. I want to know what under the sun the news is, that sets you so crazy-like. Now I'm ready—go on."

"I'm so glad, I can hardly read, my voice trembles so, but never mind, here it is."

"GEORGE BEAN, TO HIS BELOVED FRIENDS WHO
DWELL IN THE HOUSE NAIVELY TERMED
"APPLE REST," BY THE BALMY BREATH OF
A VIOLET.

"It is midnight again in my luxurious city den, and with the result of the months before me, whose ending comes nearly to a tragedy, I am inspired to write you concerning my movements.

"Day after day I have dealt out the deadly

poison which I abhor, and week after week the testimony in favor of right and against the accursed traffic has accumulated before me, as a mountain whose gigantic dimensions baffle all attempts to cut through, or circumvent it. I have run the risk of my life in trying to do my duty, and at last have been openly threatened by a man who, having for once a lucid day, was refused his dram by me, and in vain expostulated with. He not only denounced my boldness, as he termed it, but has sought to assassinate me, and it was the merest accident, or a wise ordering of what men call Providence, that I was spared from this desperate attempt to take my life.

“This is the final blow, and I, this morning, told Mr. Crane I would serve no longer as a dealer of poison. He will not abandon its sale, consequently I will abandon him. And now to the point:

“Fall and winter lie before us, as a sequence to the golden summer which all might enjoy if they would, and while I am not anticipating exposure and death by frost, it is well that I should attend to all means within my reach of getting something to do.

“Your previous mention of the school induces me to hope that I may succeed in becoming a ped-

agogue among the rustics, (to whom I myself belong.)

“I have made the most of my time, and have left no problem in Euclid unsolved. Theorems are all realities, but it is not my purpose to tell the committee what I know, let them try me if they dare. I shall return to Hyde anyway, and if you see Deacon Rayne mention to him this fact, that I am about to drop the C, in the name of my present employer, and that brings me to Rayne, the difference of the letter α and γ being just none at all.

“I shall not serve another day, and you may look for me at any moment.

“Yours, in bondage, but with hope of deliverance.

“GEORGE BEAN.”

“I will go right over to Mr. Rayne’s this very night if Millie will go with me. It is moonlight,” and Violet looked questioningly at Mrs. Chubbuck, who answered, “you may, Vilit.”

“I declare, if that man had hurt George—oh! if he had killed him, I never could have waited for the slow, though sure coming of God’s wrath. I would have searched night and day, and—well, I don’t know what I could have done, but something desperate, if I had gone to jail the next min-

ute, I would certain," and her eyes gleamed with the light of determination. Truly, George Bean had a firm friend in the good, old lady who had known him well since his early years.

Deacon Rayne rubbed his hands briskly, and jerked out, with emphatic enthusiasm, "Yes! yes! glad enough to get him!—odd but good! diamond in the rough! smart! smarter than lightning on a dry limb, yes! yes! hem—hem—glad to get him. Have a little cider and an apple. These little apples are good—we call 'em 'All the year round,' they last from crop to crop. Wife, perhaps the young ladies would like a *crowler*," (with a strong accent on the crow,) and then, with a broad smile of satisfaction, patronizingly added, "My wife is a grand cake maker."

Violet's eyes were speaking for her, though the voluble Mr. Rayne was not aware of the fact, and was evidently disappointed at the short stay and the polite refusal to partake of refreshments.

"We never drink cider at all," answered Violet, "and I have a pledge to which I am getting signers. Would you like to sign, Mr. and Mrs. Rayne?" and she produced the pledge.

"Well, well," said he, rubbing his hands together, as if to insure thought by friction, "it's a good thing, yes, a pledge is a good thing, but I

never get intoxicated—do not need to sign ; plenty round us who do ; good many who ought to ; yes, yes, quite a number.”

“ Will you Mrs. Rayne ? ” said the pure-hearted worker as she turned to the meek woman who was evidently used to being silent and unnoticed.

“ I see no harm in so doing, certainly,” she replied, in the humblest of tones, looking furtively toward her husband, who came at once to the rescue with, “ well, well, women have little to do with liquors, &c.—few of them ever get into trouble through strong drink. Mrs. Rayne would be the last one to need to sign a pledge,” and he laughed in a low, miserable, meaningless way, and Violet hastened to make her departure.

“ Come again,” said the Lord of the Manor ; “ come again, we are glad of company. If you see George before I do tell him to come right over. Thank you for bringing the news to me. Glad to get George ; another teacher had applied. Good night,” and he bowed low, filling the doorway to the exclusion of his wife, for whom a feeling of pity would arise as naturally as that of contempt, for her small-brained husband.

Mrs. Chubbuck was at the door, looking out into the moonlight, and Violet could hardly wait to get into the house, to vent her wrath and tell the news.

“What did he say, Vilit?”

“Say?” why the miserable, small-souled exclamation point said ‘yes, yes,’ and ‘well, well,’ ‘glad to get him.’ I never saw such a torpedo of nothingness in all my life. He was all explosion and exclamation, and there is nothing to him. Mercy, Mrs. Chubbuck, is he a specimen of the committee? Why I do not believe he knows Geometry from broom corn. He invited us to have cider and ‘all the year round’ apples, and then insulted his poor, tired slave of a wife, by asking her to get some crowlers for us. Goodness alive! the idea of a man who knows no better than to say crowlers for crullers, to accept the position of a school committee man. The idea of his pretending to examine George Bean for a teacher! Why it is too ridiculous, and wicked beside. He calls our noble George ‘odd but good.’ I should call *him*, odd but not good, and I had hard work to keep from asking him how many hours a day his wife had for rest. He is rich, and that is all; rich in filthy lucre, and a pauper in morals, a vagabond in knowledge, a mole on the cheek of society, a bane to humanity, and a great stumbling block to improvement. I know that his wife is afraid to say that her soul is her own, and I’ll warrant she feeds the cattle, milks the cows, picks

up her own chips, kills the chickens and carries them to market, and weaves rag carpet to sell besides, and when she has a spare moment, gets on to a load of hay, rides into the barn, and mows it away for her master. He is inferior in stature, as well as mind, and if she had started right she might have mastered him and taught him something, made a part of a man of him, and now he is certainly the antipodes of that."

"Vilit, for pity's sake stop, I shall choke to death from laughing. How on earth you get so much in a minute I can't tell, but you've hit it right, even to the load of hay, for she has always worked like a slave, and she actually fell in the barn when she was mowing away hay, and broke three ribs and nearly killed herself. He came over here to get some pieces for bandage, and growled about the long job he had before him and the cost of a hired girl. His money, to begin with, came from her father, and I suppose he is the richest man in the town to-day."

"And not a single acre of it all is in his wife's name I know," said Violet.

"I couldn't take my oath to it, but I suppose not."

"Oh! what an existence. I would rather be a kangaroo, than the wife of such a man. Talk of

a civilized land ! of the glorious freedom we enjoy ! More battles than one will be fought. We need a new constitution ! something for every-day life. A map of social conditions to point out the true way, and keep people from these quicksands of ignorance ! I wish I were a man with an income of a thousand dollars a day. I would go out and preach and help the poor, weak waiting victims on every hand."

"Oh ! Vilit you know very little yet, the trouble can't be conquered in a minute—there's a good deal in everything."

"I think to-night has proven to me there is a good deal in nothing, and that is the trouble, but I am going over there again. I will behave well; but keep close to old Mr. Ignorance until I get where I understand him pretty well, and then I will tell him some plain truths. I know I can help that woman out of the pit her own hands have helped to dig."

"You'd better not go over to-night," said Mrs. Chubbuck, quietly.

"No ; I want to sleep, and dream of something beside the face of an image unlike anything, save meanness and low-bred tyranny. I expect you do not call me a Christian, but I am the best kind of one, for I do not forget the rebukes of truth to

falsehood, which are scattered all through the New Testament. And to think that man is a Deacon, too. What a sound church pillar he is to lean on. Why, I would not venture to have him pass the contribution box in broad daylight, and to deal with him one should have Shylock right before them, and know that instead of one pound of flesh, he would ask ten."

Millie ventured to scream at this stage of the recital, "that the performance was too good to be lost, and deserved public applause."

Violet laughed heartily, but declared herself in dead earnest, and "prepared for an endless holy war."


"I am glad," said Mrs. Chubbuck, "that George is to have such good help. Between you both, old things will pass away, and all things become new in this region."

"May your prophecy be verified, my revered friend, and you may be sure, if the glorious light of a clear and growing perception ever dawns upon the meadow lands of this town of Hyde, the light of Deacon Rayne will be the wing of a fire-fly, compared with a full blaze of gas; he will not be visible not even with the aid of a microscope. A moral filter will relieve the waters in our midst of all the hidden nitrites. God speed the day, but

he never will, until his agents go to work, each in the territory which He, by nature, assigns them," and she closed her natural and strong argument, against moral depravity, and sat, with her elbow on the table, resting her head on her hand, and looking beautiful and sweet, while in her eye gleamed the holy fire of a powerful conviction.

If her bodily strength had equaled that of her mind, she would have made herself known to the world as a powerful help to those who need.

CHAPTER III.

ERE I am, once more in the presence of my good friends, whose characters are a product of infinite wisdom, for which I bless God and rejoice."

"Why, George Bean, you are like a metor, as they call them great stars that fall, you drop right down before anybody, just when they're knee deep in thought; but do sit down; how did you get here so early?"

"Walked," was the reply.

"Walked clean down from the city? good land! how did you manage to do that?"

"By a proper use of my pedal extremities, balancing myself well by an arrangement of my scanty wardrobe, and serviceable books, which I managed to hang in parcels over my shoulders."

"Good land! have you been home?"

"I have not been to home as yet."

"Not a bit of breakfast then?"

"None to-day."

"Well, sit down then, and rest your peddlin extremities, as you call your feet, while I get some breakfast. Vilit's just gone over to Deacon

Rayne's—on an errand—she'll be tickled to death to see you."

"Better not let her see me then," was the terse reply, as taking from the depths of his pocket a red cotton handkerchief, the tired traveller wiped his face, which was flushed and covered with perspiration. Twenty miles' walk before breakfast being accomplished, with no little exertion on the part of the muscles, whose vigorous work was recognized by every pore.

"Come, George; set by and partake. Don't stop for your "amen" this time; you must be as hungry as a dog. Where are your bundles?"

"On your verandah; the books are very tired; they grew heavy and weigh as much again now, as when I started."

"You'll be so lame to-morrow that you can't use your arms—how much money did you save by this performance?"

"Fifty cents exactly; just enough to buy me a new latin reader."

"Well, I'd rather given you fifty cents, than had you done it?"

"Pay me for doing it, my dear sister, and then I will buy some astronomical tables, for which I am in sore need."

The old lady laughed, and thought to herself, "he ought to have all the books he wants."

The breakfast was good, and refreshing, and just as the last mouthful was taken Violet appeared, and welcomed him heartily.

“I am fresh from the seat of ignorance,” said she, having been vis a vis with Deacon Rayne a full half hour; “he cannot be sounded, for there is nothing but mud to him. I sat there as long as I could afford to, for the purpose of giving his wife a breath. She was in the barn, cleaning up, when I went there.”

“I tell you, Mr. Bean, we have a great deal of work before us.”

“I asked him to sign the pledge again to-day but he declared he has no need to pray ‘lead us not into temptation.’ It is evident he either belongs to the Medieval age, or is a generation ahead of us all; he is the most exemplary Christian for a sinner, you ever saw.”

“Exactly,” said George, laughing heartily; “why, you are a real wide-awake blossom. I declare, I believe the Lord raised you up to help me. I shall give the truth the right of way, and my motto shall be, ‘*Ad astra aspera.*’”

“What on earth is that?” said Mrs. Chubbuck.

“‘To the stars through difficulties’; have you any objections?”

“Not the least bit if you only get there, but don’t let go of earth till you have one hand on Heaven, and something to steady you.”

“That is wise talk, Sister Chubbuck, and for fear of falling short, and losing my hold in both places, I want to stay with you in your extra Heaven a good deal. Your house is nearer the school building than that of my sire, and if I can have an out-of-the-way place here, some little corner that your grand visitors and boarders will not want, I can keep my books within my reach, and not be in your way either. Please pass your judgment, for if you say ‘George, I do not desire to be incumbered with your presence,’ I will trudge along with my baggage.”

“You know well enough I’d as soon have you with me as not, and sooner too, if you’ll only milk the cow for me when you are here. I hate to sell her, but I thought these bad joints would force me to, for I can’t bear the thoughts of havin’ a stranger boy around here to do the chores for me, and I certainly can’t do it all myself through the winter.”

“That is conclusive. All things amicably arranged ; I will take a stray corner anywhere, and now let me relieve my books,” and he hastened to bring them in.

“They weigh a ton, George ; how on earth you ever managed to bring them things I can’t see.”

“Those things, if you please, which do not weigh the tenth of a ton. Keep the truth on your side, Sister Chubbuck ; when I get the books established I must go on to my blessed mother, who will enlarge on the difficulty of ‘boarding around.’ ”

“I don’t blame her ; it’s a pesky nuisance, and you’ll half starve in some places if you don’t keep track of my doughnut jar. You must remember, George, I’m free to make all the doughnuts you want to eat, and there’s plenty of milk in the buttery. I wish you was going to stay with me all the time ; you need so much looking after, and I should head you off, once in a while, when you run so deep into them figgers you don’t know when you’re hungry. Land o’ Goshen, you will freeze and starve, both, I believe ; let me work hard as I may, I shall keep you here altogether. Leave your dirty clothes here, Blindy can do ’em with my wash.”

“Sister Chubbuck you are a marvel of earthly wisdom,” and tumbling out a half dozen pairs of home-knit hose, he muttered, “I’ll get rid of these foolish things.”

“What’s that, George ? ‘Foolish things’ ; you call mixed wool stockings, and seamed at that ? ”

“They are unnecessary, and I have discarded them,” was the reply.

“What a queer caper; seems to me you’ll try to live without eatin’ or sleepin’ next.”

“I verily wish I might,” and he departed with his bundle of stockings, and a brain filled with thought, and toward dusk returned with a smiling countenance.

“You look happy, Mr. Bean,” said Violet.

“I am on the verge of that delusive feature, in the economy of nature; a brotherly greeting from Deacon Melancthon Rayne, has warmed to life the latent joy within me. He comes here to night to confer with me regarding the matter of the school. I prefer to have witnesses; ‘sure bind, sure find.’”

“I hope you will stand up for your rights, George, and not let him Jew you down to the last copper. It’s little enough the teacher gets anyway, make the most of it.”

“Sister Chubbuck, you should remember you belong to the same church, and are bound by the creed, as well as the word, ‘to support each other.’”

“I understand that charity overlooks a multitude of sins, and I know that Melancthon Rayne and me, (“I,” interrupted George) have both got our names on the same church book, but that ain’t

sayin' we're exactly alike. If I was makin' a general prayer for the community, I'd ask the Lord to bless him with the rest, (if He could ;) but, George Bean, between you and me, ("I," again he interrupted) I never did see, meetin' house, or no meetin' house, how the Lord could bless a man that hadn't any room to receive it, any more than the sun could shine in the night for the sake of some poor sinner."

A smile rippled over the face of George, who sat tilting back in his chair, evidently anticipating the pleasure.

It was not long to wait ere the Deacon came bustling up to the side door, and, entering the sitting room, bowed on every hand, saying :

"Good evenin', good evenin' ;' true to my promise, George ; calklate to keep my word."

"Have a seat," chimed Violet, offering a chair.

"Thank you, mam ; hain't long to stay ; come over to see George about the school ; reckon we must do a little talking ; make arrangements, yes, yes ; nothin' like beginnin' right."

"You would prefer our room to our company then, perhaps," replied Violet ; "come, Millie," and her blue eyes beamed with roguish delight.

"Well, like your company ; allus like it, well, hem ! just as, yes, just as George says about that,"

hoping sincerely George would say, 'go'; but, on the contrary, his expressed desire was plainly understood."

"Stay, by all means; I have no secrets to impart; my best friends cannot know too much of me, especially in the light of a public servant. Go right along, Deacon; lay out the plan, and tell me what you expect me to pay you for the privilege of teaching in Hyde."

It was an uneasy sort of feeling that came over the Deacon then, his chair even held thorns, and he shuffled about, for with solid Mrs. Chubbuck on one side, knitting with as much earnest seriousness, as if in the performance of a moral duty, and the bright eyes of two maidens, upon the other, intent on listening, (but appearing as if unconscious to all surroundings,) one crocheting a mat, the other with a book before her, and before him the keen eyes of George, which were fixed steadily on his face, he was really in position where his usual smallness of soul could not courageously creep out.

They did not know his object in having a private interview, neither how hard it was for him to relinquish the prospect of a small addition to his purse, but as it was, he could only submit to the "powers that be," and make the bargain.

“Wall, George, the committee have put it all into my hands, and I don’t s’pose there’s any great necessity for examining of you as close as we do strangers ; I hadn’t no idea of it.”

George closed his eyes, and with a sort of sigh, drew in his breath, the ungrammatical speech fairly hurting him.

“Wall, George, now if its really settled that you’re comin’, the wages’ll be the next thing to tackle. We’ve been a wonderin’ if you’d come for less than \$12 a month, and board round, the town funds bein’ egregious low this year,” and nervously rubbing together his palms, inclining his body toward George, at whom he looked curiously, his grey eyes peered from beneath their heavy lashes, with a peculiar expression ; in truth the Deacon’s eyes were a singular feature at all times, their brows lacking entirely the arched outline, which is a chief beauty in the human face ; shaggy, and running nearly straight, forgetting to pay deference to the bridge of the nose even, upon which hairs stood like sentinels in suits of black. The Deacon’s face looked almost fiendish, filled as it was with the thought of a small gain, as he waited for the effect of his words.

Mrs. Chubbuck had dropped her knitting, and pushing her spectacles up from her eyes, darted a

look of defiance at George, whose keen blue eyes were like diamonds then, in a sudden sparkle, and then looking at the Deacon, her gaze fell piercingly as she waited for George to speak.

Fingers ran through the hairs of brown, while the breast of a true man swelled with indignation ; caution, of which he had a large share, came out at the call of the brain, and with its hand in that of indignation, quieted the wrath that rose, and the voice of apparent humility, spoke in place of anger ; albeit a little satire rose beside it as salad to the savory morsel.

“ My magnanimous friend, while I fully appreciate the great honor which is done me, in the invitation extended, to become a pedagogue in this district, it really seems to me that an individual who is twenty-five years of age, or thereabouts, ought not to do honest work among the rustics for less than the sum named,” and, clearing his throat, he continued, regardless of the Deacon, who winced at first, then sat back in his chair, and now, like a turtle, was evidently about to draw his head into the compressed apartments of his shell.

“ When I was a small boy I lived with a godly man, who got enough work out of me to nearly pay for what I eat, and although abstemiousness

is a virtue, I began to feel as if even a virtue had a proper limit, and after a year or so I grew tired of being Lazarus' dog, and determined to do something more than pick up crumbs from the rich man's table, and really, Deacon, it occurs to me I might, under some circumstances, be obliged to take up that business again. I guess, after all, Deacon, you want to give me \$12 a month as much as I want you to," and he smiled quietly, still looking at the Deacon.

Mrs. Chubbuck was just ready to express herself, when the Deacon answered,

"Wall, wall, we'll try it at that."

"Correct; and now about the rigid examination. If you will give me a week or two to converse with the classics, I presume I might be able to answer the questions which you might propound."

"Wall, wall, don't doubt you could do it right away now without any preparing, and as for the classes, you had better wait till you get into the school before you talk with them."

"I guess I had," said George, allowing the Deacon's mistake, and with great urbanity offering him one of Sister Chubbuck's good doughnuts.

The girls could not repress their laughter, and

leaving the room, flew beyond hearing, and in the low-ceiled buttery gave vent to the pent up tide.

“Did you ever see such a fool?” said Violet.

“I never did,” replied Millie.

“I am so provoked at him; and then to think of George turning it all into a joke. I would have denounced him on the spot.”

“And turned into Lazarus’ dog again,” queried Millie; “by losing the position and the \$12.”

“Pshaw! Millie, who believes that one so capable as George Bean, could find nothing else to do. The world must have a superabundance of thoughtless people in it,” and the blue in her eyes grew deeper, as she added, “it does seem too bad for him to live here, where the rocks are softer than the hearts of the people.”

“Them girls have gone somewhere to snicker,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, as Deacon Rayne vanished from her withering gaze, whose penetration succeeded in making him restless, and the least bit self-reflecting.

“*Those* girls, if you please.”

“No if you please about it; I see they was full of laugh.”

“*Were* full, you mean.”

“George,” and the old lady meant what she

said, "I tell you I don't want to have everything I say picked at so. It don't suit me at all; you know more grammar than I do; for which I am thankful, but in my old fashioned way, I am just what I am, and you can't fix me up, and put in I's and things where they belong. I'm too old to catch the new wrinkles, and I shan't try. You get such a habit, that if the Queen of England was here you'd up and say the same, and it makes me feel meaner'n dirt. Folks'll take all my mistakes just as well again, if you keep still. You know I mean it, and now don't do it any more; will you?"

"My blessed friend, the fact of your being in years, and so addicted to the misuse of words, that the expressions are a part of you, is one worthy of consideration; but for two reasons I involuntarily correct you, never in the least desiring to reflect discredit, since the mistakes are common to the section; and also because I revere the wisdom which you have gleaned from long experience. Nominative I, possessive my or mine, objective me. This rule, simple as it is correct, reproves your improper use of pronouns; and your wise thoughts, if personified by the more skillful manipulation of language, would sound as melodious as they really are, and be

better appreciated I know; this is my first reason for desiring to assist you to more perfect modes of expression.

“Secondly, you are venerated as one of Hyde’s most exemplary women, and your example of reformation would be of untold value. If, however, I annoy you, as you say, I will be less offensive.”

“You must, George; there aint no use trying to learn old dogs new tricks, and nominations and objections, as you call ’em, will be all the same to me through time; but I wanted to shake you for not resenting the insult offered by that contemptible, small-souled Rayne; I don’t believe a word about it. The committee never instructed him to make such a mean proposition. He expected to rob the town and you too, and I shall set him out in good style when it comes handy; he’d make a grand subject for sewin’ society discussion. Albert Hard and Enos Perkins are better men than he is, and what on earth they leave the school business to him for I can’t see, unless it is he worries ’em into it. Henceforth, and forever, I’ll call him Rayne, without the deacon; he’s prouder of that title than our old rooster of his tail.”

“I should think it likely,” said George, who fairly screamed at the castigation the poor deacon

received ; crying : “ hold me, hold me, it is too much ; ” and Violet and Millie ran to ascertain the trouble, entering the room just as George, in his great glee, tipped over, chair and all ; while Mrs. Chubbuck, laughing till she cried, implored him to stop, adding positively : “ you ’ ll have fits if you don ’ t, and it ’ s a fact you bring a breeze with you always ; you ’ re tickled to death to think Rayne ’ s actin ’ so like a fool has got my temper raised to bilin ’ . ”

“ Stop ! stop ! ” he cried ; “ oh ! this is rich. ”

School opened with eighteen scholars, great and small, young and old, bright and dull—mostly the latter.

The performance of the first day was suggestive, and fixed the fact in the minds of the pupils that George was the master, and that notwithstanding he was a poor man ’ s son, who might, and ought to have been possessed of more worldly effects, he was rich in knowledge, compared not only with them, but with the entire population of Hyde, save a few stray exceptions. That underneath the droll humor, there was a biting sarcasm that sent back all their jokes with pungent effect ; and that if George ’ s head presented always an uneven surface, it was because the hairs were verily bristling with thought, which, as it ran

through his brain, caused the involuntary passing of his fingers through his hair.

Certain it was that with the awkwardness of the first day in his new position, added to the peculiar ruggedness of his habitual manifestations, whose every move was indicative of the man, and at utter variance with all others, even to the manner of his bow, there was a certain revealment of the interior that commanded respect; and the first piercing glance cast upon an erring scholar, shot straight through the offender, and like a half-spent bullet, finished its force on another. The second reproof of the eyes, accompanied with a pertinent suggestion regarding deportment, was the bursting of a bomb shell in their midst, and not one of the dozen and a half scholars that did not feel it.

This was a desideratum, inasmuch as good discipline rarely reigned in Hyde, and George went home in triumph at night, with an inaugural success and a geometrical proposition side by side, in the room of his thought, while the ventilated ideas of the pupils, who gathered in knots of four, were a sage reflection on the logical teacher, and did credit to human hearts. "He's a great teacher, knows lots, and we must mind," said one among them.

"Yes, sir-ee, you bet," answered the brightest

eyed boy. "No more nicking sticks, and wearing extra jackets if he goes to flogging."

Up spoke a sweet Mary, blue-eyed and tender hearted. "He'll never flog a boy, never ; George Bean is a Christian man."

"Does he belong to the church ?"

"Yes, he does ; he joined the Baptist church long ago, but that ain't the best sign about him ; just think of Mr. Rayne, he's a church man, but he isn't George Bean."

"That's so every time ; three cheers for honest George Bean;" and there at the little school house under the mountain, went up three ringing cheers and a tiger, for one who would have made a grand speech had he been present.

"Did you have a hard day ?" said Mrs. Chubbuck, as George entered the house at the close of this first day, "glad enough you ain't boardin' round."

"I have experienced a pleasure which is akin to that of one, who after a long and weary pilgrimage, at last finds a corner which really fits him. The pedagogue's chair is the place for me at present and a most agreeable change. The attendance however is meagre, I hope to increase the number by visiting a few whom I know have young children who must come."

“That’s you to a T; but if a few of them are as impudent and sassy to you as they have been to all the rest, you’ll have your hands full with what you’ve got to ’tend to. I expected you’d have your eyes half blinded with spit-balls thrown at you.”

George’s thumbs turned as naturally to the arm-holes of his vest, as his eyes to the ceiling, and after a moment, his face glowing with the light of a new pleasure, which he had long possessed in an imaginary sense, he answered his interested friend.

“Ambiguity is an intolerable possession, a tenant which disturbs the serenity of those in whom it exists, and whose radiating influence is perceived by others in unpleasant ways; while I was in the city, I was possessed of this miserable condition, and a fruitless wanderer in thought, although I lost no time in the store, and, to all appearances, did my duty, really did nothing; but now, ah, yes, now I can live with paper always ready for my use; books under my eye, and while I am instructing the juveniles I can be helping myself. As to the scholars I am well assured that I hazard nothing in attempting to manage them. There will be no trouble, and while I may not expect great results, I imagine

it will be no trick at all to hold them to their course; and that reminds me of an old Quadrant I observed in your garret, can I purchase it of you? It is old I know, but of some service yet, and I need all such things. I have managed to get hold of the Level which was used in laying out our canal, and with a few mathematical instruments I shall be really in trim. I need a Transit, a Theodolyte, a truly reliable Telescope, and a host of astronomical appurtenances, books and charts to lead my steps aright."

"Well, you can have that old thing in the garret; 'taint worth havin' though, but I can't see why you want to know so much here, you can't make folks understand half you say, now, and if you go to gettin' bigger words and higher ideas, who will get within gunshot of you? I can't see."

"You forget my motto, and the fact that it is not possible for me to know too much."

"I'm half afraid too much learning will make you mad, as they said about Paul."

"The old cat and all her kittens. If I can be as mad as Paul was, or be likened to him, I shall consider myself lucky," and he laughed immoderately.

"Here stands Vilit waiting to talk, and I've had the floor so that she couldn't get a word in

edgewise, as sister Betsey used to tell me, when I got to talkin'; nobody could more than say 'my goose she,' and hardly that. Go on Vilit."

"I only wanted to express my great joy at the result of the day's work, for one day among scholars is enough to prove a teacher's position; and perhaps the kindness of your heart, Mr. Bean, is the very thing they feel, and causes them to respect you; I know I rarely judge a person by their words; for if they have no sweetness beneath, the pleasant effect is lost, no matter how euphonious the syllables may be."

"I wonder if there are any singers among them?"

"I know not, and, consequently, cannot affirm regarding it. I fear I shall be no help in this accomplishment; for while I have voice enough, I know not how to handle it, although I ought to, for my mother sings like a bird; her voice is as sweet, as powerful; you must go over with me and hear her sometime."

"Oh! I have heard her; you are too late; she sang to me one hour, a few days ago, and I have learned, 'The rose tree in full bearing,' that sweet, old song; but I was wondering if I could not come over to the school once a week, and sing with them; I would like to."


"That will be the very thing; you must come

right over this week ; that is just exactly right ; perhaps you will teach me to sing."

"George," said Mrs. Chubbuck, "If you want to govern the boys you'd better not try to sing ; you make such a noise, and get off the track so many times, they'll all laugh ; I hain't forgot the night at meeting I had to stuff my handkerchief into my mouth to keep from screamin' right out, when you shot into Lenox, along side of Eli Jones, and you wasn't within ten miles of the note. It give the whole meetin' house a shock like one of them 'lectric caperin' things."

"So be it, my most amiable sister ; and now if you will let me lie on the floor, and think, we will let our little flower here sing something, and suiting the action to the word, he stretched himself out, while Violet sang, with touching sweetness, "Flow gently, sweet Afton ;" and with the song in his ears, and Logarithms in his brain, George fell asleep.

CHAPTER IV.

LMOST every week opened a chapter in the school history, and from the verdant youth, who out-numbered his mates in both years and stature, to the wee slip of a girl, who rarely missed her place at the head of the class, there were anxious glances cast in the direction of the door, as regularly as Wednesday came, for Violet Leavitt's visits were well appreciated by the unadulterated and natural admirers of human goodness; and ever since the day when her sweet voice had joined with theirs, as leading the tune they sang, "Auld Lang Syne," their hearts had beat as one, with love for the sweet comer, and they were getting on bravely. New songs had risen beside the old, and "Lone and Still beside the Streamlet," with Felicia Heman's "Bird of the Greenwood," ran along side by side, brightening with their fresh sweetness, the time-worn dresses of the old and well-worn tunes, like pleasant lights which rest among dark shadows.

The teacher, notwithstanding Mrs. Chubbuck's timely warning, ventured once to join the chorus, but the explosion which followed, settled in his

mind the strong conviction that he was not born to sing, and he remarked to Violet that he should desist from further attempts at song, lest he should prostitute the dignity becoming to a teacher of juveniles.

The scholars had increased in numbers, and the interest manifested in their studies was something more than had ever before been manifested. The committee were well pleased, and the two who had most brains were not slow in expressing themselves. Deacon Rayne, on the contrary, was a "little fearful of givin' George too much leeway," and made visits to the school, and in diver's ways, expressed himself regarding the manner of instruction, &c.

The teacher never forgot to ask him to say something to his scholars, and when good opportunity presented, produced problems for some of his best scholars, asking the Deacon to talk about them if he desired, when he well knew he had no arithmetical conception beyond the first four rules, and upon one occasion, and about three months after the opening of the school, he consented to speak, and attempted an address on education. He started off very well, by explaining to them that the idea of getting an education was to know something; to not live without knowing enough to 'tend to

their own book accounts, thereby avoiding the expense of a book-keeper, and the frauds that was generally practiced by them. "Figgers," he said, "are the very most important part in a man's knowledge, and readin', also, is important, because, that while extra newspapers was unnecessary, and a great waste of time, there was always standin' readin' matter that must be attended to."

After a short run of thoughts, with now and then a big word, which choked the Deacon as he grappled with it, he began to baulk decidedly, and George was obliged to switch him on to the track, and at last he ended his hard work by saying, "It always was hard for me to speak, as it is for most shrinkin' people, and the hull thing must be considered in a nut shell; you want to know something, and that is the reason what the town are bearing the expense of a public school for."

It was fortunate for the aspiring deacon, that he did not read the expression of disgust in the children's faces, as a good reader of human nature would have easily done. When he took his departure, his breast was inflated with the self-rendered verdict of success; and he determined to again venture on the same sea, when opportunity presented.

The teacher had been filled with a sense of the

ridiculousness of the speech, and read aright the minds of his pupils. After the afternoon reading exercise he dismissed the school, and went laughing over the hill, toward Mrs. Chubbuck's. Her house was really the best house he ever knew, and he never sat at the well-appointed table, without thinking of something which for a long time he did not tell—something regarding his home and mother.

It was not a wonder that the girls and boys held an indignation meeting after school that night, albeit the days were short, and the sun hastening westward, with the rapidity one learns to respect, if not admire, and the exercises were of necessity, short, giving only time for a word all round, and the verdict, which was rendered by acclamation.

“The Deacon ought to be court martialed; that's a fact,” said bright-eyed Mary and Tom Scott; the giant among them declared “he would haul him up himself ef he give George Bean any sarse.”

“We've got to go home,” said Timothy Todd, “but let's come early to-morrow, and make some resolutions, and present a paper to Mr. Bean. He needn't think that we think he does anything but right, for all Melancthon Rayne's hintin', and swellin' up like a toad, trying to scare us with big

words, and puttin' every one in the wrong place."

"Pretty good for Timothy grass," said Mary;
"I guess I can make some resolutions that will
suit us; come early."

And with dinner kettle swinging,
And tangled curls of gold,
The sweet ambitious Mary
Ran toward the dear home-fold.

Promptly at 8 o'clock they were all before the school house door, and as their teacher came within sight, wrapped, as usual, in the mantle of his thoughts, his attention was arrested by a loud shout, and with the touch of a second thought, he turned aside from the main path which led to the building, and, going swiftly to its rear, made his way to a sheltered side, where he could see, and not be seen.

Bright-eyed Mary was the speaker. She had doffed her mittens, and her tin dinner pail rested on the snow beside her. Evidently, some important message was to be given.

"Now don't laugh so boys; I'll never be able to read it in the world if you do. This is the third time I've tried, and Mr. Bean'll be here. Do keep still, please. The tune is 'Yankee Doodle,' and I've made five copies, and we can look over each other when we sing. I'll just read it

through once, and when you sing, remember to begin with one extra note for the Deacon. There's only ten verses, but I can make more." Then in clear loud tones, and, with great enthusiasm, she read :

Deacon Melancthon Rayne; he came
Inside our school house door,
And there he stood by good George Bean,
And talked an hour or more.

CHORUS.—Poor Melancthon, Lancthon Rayne,
Poor Melancthon Rayne;
If he knows what's good for him
He never'll come again.

George Bean knows more in half a minute
Than he does in all day;
And when he comes again to talk,
We'll scare the crow away.

CHORUS.—

He talked about our reading, and
About our 'rithmetic;
He don't know what a fraction is,
His skull it is so thick.

CHORUS.—

George was bursting with appreciation of the scene. The air clamored fairly with the unyielding nasal chorus embodying bitter "Lancthon's" ambitiously elongated; as from the throats of the children, the syllables were zealously launched upon the tide of air. The old mountain seemed

laughing at them, as it threw back their words, one after another, with as much force as they were given, and no unprejudiced observer could have said there was lack of effort on the part of the children, even though skill did not appear. But the honest teacher knew it was not wise for the entire poem to be sung, and at the end of the third verse, and its chorus, made his appearance. They were warming with zeal, and the syllable "Dea" came from their lips, as without warning, he stepped before them. That one syllable which ended suddenly, was like the discharge of a pistol, and every eye turned to meet the gaze of the teacher, who stood with both hands in his pockets, his eyes twinkling roguishly, and a perplexed smile crossing his face as he spoke.

"My dear children, while I appreciate your kindly feeling for 'good George Bean,' I cannot permit your musical entertainment to be carried further, for reasons of both policy and principle. Principle instructs us to beware of giving a brother offense, even though we ourselves may suffer at his hands, and it is always better to suffer wrong than to do it. You remember how we read in the good book, 'if a man sue you at the law, and take your coat, give him your cloak also.' Let us practice it as nearly as we can, allowing our-

selves a little room for thought, by being as 'wise as serpents and as harmless as doves.'

"Then, again, true policy teaches us to speak well of the bridge that we cross in safety.

"Deacon Rayne who, it seems, has, in your eyes, proven offensive, was the man who gave me to you as a teacher. If he should chance to hear you, (and the power of your voices will penetrate a long way in this clear air,) he would be greatly incensed, considering your song an indecorous outrage to his feelings, and undoubtedly blame me for allowing such a proceeding. This would lead to the inevitable result of my dismissal, which would be sad for us all. So you perceive the wisdom of both principle and policy bids you to forbear. I think I must not blame our 'Little Lamb' too much for her explosive rhyme. You all, doubtless, felt more sensitive, regarding the Deacon's remarks, than was necessary. I really believe he meant no harm, and we must call him a friend after all."

Mary was crying at the thought of being disapproved, but the hand on her shoulder, and the word of kindness reassured her, and Timothy Todd asked boldly, "May we give three cheers for Mary, we like her so much?"

"Oh! yes; give three cheers for a young poet-

ess, and we will give her a better subject for her next verse.”

Up went the three cheers, and the whole party went cheerfully to their school house duties.

Verily the rein of love, guided by wisdom, is both silken and strong.

The rehearsal of the affair proved a fruitful theme, and brought from both Mrs. Chubbuck and Violet, appropriate contributions of expressed thought.

The winter was filled with happenings. Under George's supervision, a sort of Lyceum for debate was born, and weekly, upon Thursday evening, the young and old gathered together in the little red school house to hear the discussions which were carried on with enterprise and vigor.

Moral questions were those which were considered, and George was always on the right side. More than this, the dexterity with which he used the weapons of his opponents in debate, was a source of amusement to the majority, and after a time it became a conceded fact that George Bean's side would win at all events, no matter what the question might be.

The great love he had for temperance cropped out always, and when at last he brought this question before them, “Is it or is it not right to sell

and drink intoxicating liquors?" the stir in Hyde extended beyond its limits, and numbers were present from an adjoining town, anxious to hear the discussion.

There were a few sound men in Hyde, and not less than three who had really thoughts belonging to them individually, which they were desirous to ventilate, their neighbors to the contrary notwithstanding. This was a help, and George felt that his labor might not be in vain, for while he loved discussion, and was never more delighted than when an argument was in process, he was working in this matter for a purpose, and it was a loyal one.

It was not necessary for him to unveil the skeleton in his father's house; not necessary for him to relate the various sufferings which he and his family had undergone, while tears rained down the cheek of his mother, and the albumen of his father's brain was cooked like that of an egg when subjected to the torturing fires of the enslaving draught. It was not wise for him to wound himself by a public rehearsal of the loss which not only brain but soul had suffered in this demoralizing process. Those whose experiences lay near his own could feel the truth as well from a word picture drawn at a distance, and the congestion of

feeling which shut up all the avenues of loving life, was most vividly portrayed in his plea against this traffic in human souls.

A holy silence fell upon his listeners, as with touchingly perfect language, and a voice that trembled with feeling, he essayed to reveal the dimensions of the enemy, and gathered before them a sad-eyed mother, a group of sorrowing children, and a blear-eyed idiotic parent, for whom nothing but the merest pity could be left.

“There is nothing left to respect, when a man has crowded his soul out of sight,” said the speaker ; “when the hands of his heart are bandaged tightly, and the very fluid that warms his veins is congealed at the freezing touch of the demon drink ; when his eyes are covered as with a film he cannot see, and becomes, both in body and mind, miserable. It is a sad fact, and I look about me to-day and wonder that the mountains do not cry aloud for help.

“In God’s name, my friends, let us redeem ourselves ; let us raise here in Hyde a temperance banner, and let us, ourselves, make the strong staff from which it floats. We will sign the pledge, and if there come to us any who suffer this accursed habit, we will help them to become men ; bring smiles to their homes and children. Many

a poor woman struggles to-day to replenish the fires of comfort, which rum, with its own bright flame, has eclipsed; for while it burns like a destroying flame, it makes a cheerless hearth for women and children to sit by.

“Hear me, and help; let us call to the people all about us, and swear ourselves, from this day hence, freedom from the accursed slavery, ridding ourselves of the chains, which the very stills in our midst are forging.”

There were few dry eyes among the assembly, and even the small heart of Deacon Rayne came so near the warmth emitted from the fires of thought, that he almost began to consider the subject; but when the stills were alluded to, and he realized the fewer drinkers would relieve him of patronage, he settled back at once into his narrow chair, and said, “Let the rest of ’em stop making whiskey if they want to; I shan’t let my apples rot.”

The vote was taken, the cause of right triumphed, and the benediction fell, as usual, on George’s side of the question. His delight knew no bounds, and, although, the hour was growing late, he could not avoid producing a pledge, and inviting the people to sign.

“Come, Millie” whispered Violet, “Let us go up and sign.”

“Why, I have signed it before,” was the reply.

“Never mind, the example is worth something, come,” and, arm in arm, the two went forward.

This caused a ripple of sensation, and several young people ventured to add their names.

“Behold the example of the young,” cried George, “a little child shall lead them. Come fathers and mothers.”

The tall form of Eli Perkins was seen moving through the crowd in the centre of the house, and again George cried, “Here comes Brother Perkins, where is Deacon Rayne?”

The deacon knew just where he was, and more than this, just where he wanted to be. He was edging his way out, and saw with pleasure before him the open way of retreat, at the very moment George’s call sounded like a clarion trumpet in their midst.

Timothy Todd, turning quickly at the sound of his name, comprehended at a glance the situation, and with no deference to the form which was reduced by stooping to dwarfish dimensions, he answered loudly, “He’s here, I see him, Mr. Bean.”

The deacon darted a look of defiance from under his shaggy brows, and mumbling some-

thing about people's minding their own business, still kept his face towards the door, and a few minutes later had quietly slipped out of sight.

The meeting was a success if the deacon's name did not swell the list ; and George walked home with the girls in high glee.

Mrs. Chubbuck was waiting and impatient at the delay. Nine o'clock exactly was her rule, and here the old clock said twenty-five minutes to eleven.

"They've come at last," she said, breathing a deep sigh of relief, as their footfalls sounded on the crisp, hard snow, and George's laugh rang out on the air, and she hurried to the door with the candle.

"Good land of mercy, what on earth's the matter kept you so long?"

"My dear sister, did you sit up to await our return?"

"I should think I did," was the dry reply.

"That is too bad," said Violet and Millie, in one breath.

"Well, it ain't no use to talk about it now. What's done is done. I might better sit up than go to bed and stew about you ; and how did I know but George had said something to make 'em mad over there, and you couldn't get back. I

never knew a discussin' meetin' to last four hours before; but you're hungry, and I've set out some biscuit, and left some warm tea on the hearth for you. I'm a goin' to bed now, and let you get your own victuals. I shan't stop to hear a word, George, not even if you have found the beginning of the Millenium. I feel just as a bear does when he goes into his winter quarters, and I'm going to bed," and she went and lay wrapped in thought one full hour, part of the time amused to hear the movements of the trio who could not refrain from talking over the meeting; and George's whisper particularly pleased her. As sleep came slowly near, and settled at last as a pleasant though heavy hand on her eyes and brain, she stepped over into the land of dreams, saying drowsily, "George's whisper is as loud as an ordinary prayer."

"It wasn't because I havn't any interest in what you wanted to tell me, George, but you see I'm as punctual as the sun in getting up and going to bed, and I'm getting older every day, and one night's rest lost makes the next day seem like a meetin' with a dry sermon and no singin'. I can't somehow get along nights without just so much wake and so much sleep, but you can tell me this morning what you wanted to last night," and the smile of pleasant expectancy settled upon the face of the good woman.

George cleared his throat, struggling with the thoughts which rose. "We had the best kind of a meeting, Sister Chubbuck, and the last of it was a feast of fat things."

Here are the names enrolled on this pledge. This is a result which augurs well for the coming period, and few hearts among us will mourn the power of alcohol if the work goes on as bravely as it has commenced. I am paid in advance for all the kicks I shall receive for doing my duty. Eli Perkins and Albert Hard have their signatures here. Just look at the list."

"You can read 'em, my spectacles are in the other room," and when he finished she asked, "Where was Rayne?"

"He was present, but did not come forward to sign. Probably he felt delicate; you know the deacon is of a retiring disposition."

"Yes, he is. I've always noticed that when truth gets into practice, and aims a gun at him, he retires about as quick as he can. I'm glad Eli and Albert have put their names down. They won't take back their word, and you are all right, you may thank your stars for it, for the deacon never'll forgive you for tackling whiskey stillers, and the meanest thing about him is, the stuff he sells is rot-gut, as they call it. 'Tain't nothing letter."

“What an awful name,” said Violet.

“Well, it’s awful stuff, Vilit. They put all sorts o’ things in it. Land o’ goodness, I wouldn’t wash my rheumatizy feet and hands in the stuff he sells, much less——”

It was a piercing, blood-chilling scream that came from a woman’s lips, and put an end to Mrs. Chubbuck’s unfinished sentence. The four who sat at the old fashioned cherry table started simultaneously, and looking toward the door, a sight met their gaze which caused feelings of terror to fill them. Mrs. Chubbuck was the first to speak.

“B’lindy, what ails you? Tell me quick,” and she went toward the woman, who stared at them with a terrible gleam in her eyes of faded blue, and giving no heed to the question, scream after scream escaped her lips, until, with one wild effort she fell as if lifeless.

About her shoulders was a thin plaid shawl; her dress was thin, and the sleeves rolled up above her elbow, her bare arms and hands being blue with cold. She wore nothing on her head, and a heavy mass of dark hair hung about her face and fell over her shoulders, almost touching her waist. Her well worn shoes were not tied, and the gray knit hose rolled closely over them.

She was evidently unprepared for her walk, and what could be the secret of it all ?

“It ain’t no matter now what the matter is, something queer enough has come over her, and what’s got to be done is to get her back to herself. You take her head and shoulders, George, I’ll take her feet, and lay her right in there on the sofy. Vilit, get me the camphor. You bring a jug of hot water, Millie, and a basin of hot water, too, I want. There, that’s it ; she’ll come to in a minute. You go and eat your breakfast, George ; the school-house is waiting, you know.”

A few moments of work such as only good motherly souls like Mrs. Chubbuck understand, brought blood back to the cheek it had forsaken : pain crept with life into the numb fingers and toes, and the large eyes opened to look wonderingly into the kind face bending over her.

“Never mind lookin’, B’lindy, shut your eyes for now, you’re tired.”

“Where—he—oh !” fell from the lips which were as yet purple with the blood which had settled in them, as over her frame ran a shudder, and the lids fell over her eyes and secret as well.

“Gone again,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, “give me more camphor. I don’t believe she ever fainted

before in all her life ; I guess Simeon's been drunker'n ever."

"Why, is she Simeon Eastman's wife?" whispered George.

"Of course, she that was B'lindy Jones, poor creature, she's washed herself most to death. He hain't bought a cent's worth of anything but whiskey in five years."

Just then a moan escaped the lips of the poor woman, and consciousness returned. This time her eyes opened on George, who stood beside Mrs. Chubbuck, and the sight of it seemed to inspire her with strength, for she raised herself, and looking steadily into his eyes, said slowly and with great earnestness,

"Simeon is liquor wild ; he cursed me all night because I went to the meeting and signed the pledge : he was crazy drunk when I got home. I have had no sleep ; oh, let me die, die now ! Keep out of his way, Mr. Bean ; it was to warn you I came," and falling back on her pillow, a thin, small stream of blood trickled from her mouth. Mrs. Chubbuck wiped it away, and as soon as she could speak Belinda told her it must come from her side.

"Such a kick, Mrs. Chubbuck. Oh ! he has killed me, surely. I am glad my babies are there, Do you think I will see them ?"

Tears were gathered in the folds of an ample apron as they fell, and the answer came promptly.

“See ’em? I guess you will, B’lindy. I wonder what you’ve done to keep you out of heaven; but you poor tired creature, you shan’t die. I’m going to keep you here with me now, and let you breathe twice in peace. Don’t say die.”

“Oh! Mrs. Chubbuck, you are so good. I’d have gone long ago but for kindness, but I hope I’m sure of Heaven. You know I am a poor church goer, because I’ve been ashamed of my clothes. I had nothing fit to wear ever.”

“Pshaw! Jane, that would help instead of hinder your getting through the gate. Don’t you s’pose your thoughts of wanting to go to meetin’ would be carried right up to the Lord’s ear, by his angels that’s allus round readin’ our souls as easy as we read a newspaper? Of course it would, and you’d receive an answer and a blessing very likely, before the first part of the sermon had reached the ears of the folks in the meetin’ house. You’re goin’ to get over this, and now I’ll get Vilit to come and set here and give you some breakfast, and I’ll go and eat mine. You frightened me out of six senses; I thought at first you’d dropped dead.”

“Can I do anything?” asked George.

“Keep out of his way, oh! do,” said Belinda.

“Never fear, my dear sister; I shall not be hurt,” and when Violet came in with the breakfast, he took his departure for school, Mrs. Chubbuck following him to the door with a little raw-hide in her hand.

“Take this George, and lay it on to Simeon if he crosses your path. It’ll fetch him; I’ve seen it tried.”

George took it, and smilingly answered,

“I expect to be persecuted. No man ever did exactly right who did not suffer.”

“Are you afraid of her husband’s coming here?” said Millie to Mrs. Chubbuck.

“*No ma’am*, I ain’t. He may come, but he’ll go away again, and without her too. Probably by this time he’s gettin’ out of his tantrum, and will want her to come home, and bring something for him to eat. I’ve give him many a good meal for her sake, but now I’ll set my face like flint to the wall, and say, ‘Get behind me, Sim Eastman, you shan’t have another thing.’ I won’t even fill the vinegar jug, and he loves vinegar powerfully well when he gets over a drunk. Poor miserable fool,” and then she added musingly, “I never did see any body that seemed to stir

up things like George. A breeze follows him always ; he hain't done nothing but right neither. Christ turned the money changers out of the synagogue. Well, principle lasts longer than anything else. I shall stand by the truth at any rate."

CHAPTER V.

WHAT a miserable little hut it was that Simeon Eastman lived in. Who would ever have dreamed of applying that sweet word "Home" to the four wretched rooms it contained, two below stairs and two above, the latter running to the eaves on either side, and looking like little comfortless tents, with their lack of furnishings? The front room below had two south windows, and held a few poor pictures, whose original old-time beauty had fled; and the samples worked by Simeon's mother such a long time ago, with some yellow painted chairs, which were her very best, and one might have more pleasant thoughts here, for, although, the carpet on the floor, made and woven for Belinda at her marriage, in the loom which now sat silent in the unfinished chamber of a large farm house twenty miles away, had been sold by her, to relieve a momentary necessity; one could imagine how the sunny south slope might have brightened at the touch of thrift. The two large trees of horse chestnut before the door were time-honored veterans, and this last year, a strange compound of life and death, for

while some of the bare branches stretched forth their long arms and skeleton fingers, around them grew others with leaves of green, and wore the full sweet blossoms, that came and hung over the dead bare limbs as if to hide the sorrow ; strange that Simeon saw nothing of all this, and did not realize the typical language of nature, who, in her blossoms covering death, appealed to him in such a touching, tender way ; why could he not have seen it, and heard the birds, who came and sang in the branches, chirping, loud and strong, “Let your life bud and blossom, Simeon ! there is yet time to cover up the dead branches, Simeon ! Simeon !” but they sang in vain, and, here to-day, as he stands before the door, and looks across the cold frozen snow, muttering something about women’s having their own way, a snow bird settles for a moment near, and, looking for crumbs where there are none, says sadly, “oh, Simeon ! Simeon !” but he is deaf to it all, and goes back to his scantily furnished hearth, and the little bare pantry ; he is nearly sober, and quite hungry ; just as Mrs. Chubbuck said.

“I shan’t go after her,” he growled ; “she would go, and if she freezes, I can’t help it ; such a temper, and all because I happened to have a little whiskey in, and stirred up things a little,”

and he fumbled about finding, at last, some meal, which he thought might be converted into mush, or perhaps he might make a Johnny cake, as Belinda did ; he had seen her do it often. “ No ; I guess I’ll make mush,” and the little solitary kettle, that so often held mush, and nothing more, was called to hang on the crane hook ; but the fire : “ I’ll never have anything at this rate,” he muttered ; “ I wonder what she does with all the wood ; she must waste it ; women are so extravagant ; married women and pretty young girls don’t act much alike ; marriage is a lottery,” and his fruitless search for wood, went on, until at last, he shouldered one of the few rails that were left, and, grumbling still, went for the axe, whose dullness compared with the general condition of things on the premises ; and at last the water boiled in the little kettle, and with a broken spoon he stirred his meal into it.

“ I guess I can get me something to eat ; she needn’t think I shall go after her if she stays all day ;” but the first mouthful of his pudding caused a puzzled look to pass over his face ; “ something is the matter ; what is it ? oh ! salt ; well, that’s easy enough got. I wish I had a little milk to go with it ; should have, I suppose, if I’d held my tongue ; can’t do it always though.” The thorough

soberness which had come upon him, aroused the sense which really had a place in his brain, and while he still muttered, as he walked uneasily about, looking into the fire, and out at the cold grey atmosphere of the bitter day, he steadily felt the nestling of the truth, which ran into his heart when soberness left the door ajar, and he was in an uncomfortable condition of mind.

George Bean ate his dinner that day slowly, and ventured to make some suggestions regarding Simeon ; Mrs. Chubbuck being thoroughly aroused, to his abuse of his wife, gave no heed to the pity rising in the kindly heart of the philanthropist.

“George Bean, eat your dinner, and don’t ask me to pity Simeon. I can’t do it. It’s B’lindy that wants all our pity ; I wouldn’t give him so much as a cold potato ; put down your fingers and stop your “shooing !” I feel a righteous indignation and I say let the miserable drunkard come to his senses ; let him alone ; he won’t starve before he can earn a breakfast. I know there’s work up there to the saw mill for him, and he knows it.”

“Sister Chubbuck, remember the command to bless them that curse us, and also the fact that we should ask forgiveness only as we are willing to grant it. I shall take Simeon something to eat, and if you will not let me have something here, I

will go where I can obtain some bread, and potatoes, and a piece of pork ; or perhaps better take it and not tell you of it until after the deed is done. The man is, by this time, in a pitiable condition, and suppose there is work waiting ; his hands tremble ; his whole physical being is jarred, and the effect of his debauch cannot be instantly wiped out, and you and I must do as we would be done by. I cannot rest, my dear sister, without availing myself of the God-imposed duty, which is incumbent upon every child of the sod," and he waited a reply.

Mrs. Chubbuck swallowed the tea that was cool in the saucer, having been stirred thoroughly during the remarks, and fastening the clear gaze of her talking eyes upon him said, "Well, I think Simeon has done enough ; he has wasted his substance, George, and, now to let B'lindy go back, and feed him up, will be jest what I've done more times over than I've got fingers and toes, and I want to keep her out of his way for a while, and let him come to anchor, as he ought to, and will, perhaps. If he comes here I shall tell an up and down lie, before he shall see her ; she has promised me to keep away, and——"

"There, there," interrupted George, "I would prefer to know nothing of your agreement with

Belinda, and let me, moreover, explain that while I would not reveal her whereabouts, deeming it wisdom in the plan of her continued absence, of great importance, and a sanitary means of producing a salutary effect, I am, nevertheless, justified in relieving the wants of a tired and needy physical. Rum drinking is a disease that invites most skillful treatment, and now, in the very hope of reformation, will you accede to my proposal, to carry him something to eat?"

"I have said I wouldn't send him one thing, and if you make me tell a story George——"

"See here, sister Chubbuck, you have this moment declared that you would prevaricate if necessary to save Belinda; it is only the other end of the string I am pulling."

"Do let him have it," interposed Violet, whose tender heart overflowed easily.

"I ask merely to buy the food."

"Oh! pshaw, George; well, I shall go where I can't see what you take," and when she carried in an extra cup of tea to Belinda, and found her crying, she knew well enough it was because she was glad of George Bean's manifest kindness, and swallowing a lump in her own throat, she said: "Here, B'lindy, take this tea; perhaps between George and me, we'll bring the crooked things out

straight." Meanwhile, Violet and Millie were filling a basket, which was taken to school, and a rather short afternoon session was succeeded by a walk home over the road where Simeon lived.

Rocks do not talk, and it was with perfect confidence that the basket of provisions was hidden securely within a stone's throw of Simeon's house; between two friendly stones, and for this reason nothing was visible to Simeon, except the figure of George, whom he did not for a moment suppose, came intentionally near his door, but venturing upon a thought, he accosted him with:

"How d'ye do Mr. Bean?"

"Hurrah there!" was the reply.

"Just come from home?"

"No, sir; I am fresh from the academy of progress in the sciences. Can I be of service," and he came to the door stone.

"Well, I wanted to ask if you see my wife when you went home to dinner?"

"No, sir," was the honest reply; "have you lost her?"

"She went off early this morning; I thought she was going over there," and a secret fear took possession of him, as he added, "I don't feel over and above well."

"What is the trouble?" said George; "you seem to be trembling."

“Come in,” said Simeon, who was truly glad of a sympathetic word, and he offered a chair before the meagre flame of the fire-place.

“You ought to have some composition tea ; have you plenty to eat?”

Simeon shook his head.

“Well, you are in a bad fix ; I am thankful I drifted around this way. Something must be done for you ; have you any more wood ? the fire is low.”

Simeon looked out at the few remaining rails with a pitiable expression, shaking his head in answer to the query.

“Why, you must be attended to ; what is the matter with you ? you are a smart, bright fellow ; you should do better than this ; I believe the Lord himself sent me around this way.”

“Mr. Bean,” and the form of the naturally fine looking fellow, straightened itself ; his eye glowed brighter, with the impulse which an unexpected kindness had awakened, and he said, with commendable honesty, “I have been a fool, and worse. I had a good mother and father, and I was taught to be honest and industrious. I always drank cider ; so did my father ; but I never thought I could live and do as I have done ; I am a brute, and not a man ; I——” but his voice grew husky ;

his eyes filled with water, and he trembled so that George took hold of the chair to steady it, and, soothingly said, "I guess you must have some food to strengthen you up, and, if you'll wait a little, I will get something."

"I can wait, Mr. Bean, for there is no other way ; I wish my wife would come," and his friend left him, to return shortly with the well-filled basket.

"Where did you get this?" inquired Simeon.

"That is a question ; but never mind ; here is what you want," and, in his awkward way, for George was no help indoors, and could not be if he tried, he set the food before him, and, getting some hot water from the little kettle Simeon had hung over the coals, he made some ginger tea, which, with the addition of a little molasses fortunately possessed, made a very appreciable drink ; the fire in the stomach left the terrible impression ; the scar which, though unseen, is fully appreciated by the victim, and the stimulating and toning influence of the ginger tea, was just the thing, and George knew it ; not because he himself had experienced the like, but, in his own way of naturally and logically deducting facts, he realized more than others, and felt all the pity he manifested, and more.

“Now you feel better,” he said, as Simeon finished the meal so strangely brought; so sorely needed.

“I do, and now I want to tell it all to you, Mr. Bean; I will not keep back a word; you unmanned me with your kindness; I thought you were so dead set on liquor, that you never would have any patience with a man who drank, and before I say another word, let me ask you to forgive me. I have called you a ‘darned old temperance cuss’; and more than this, other names which I would not repeat; have cursed you when I have been sober, and I came very near breaking up your meeting with brickbats last night. I meant to do it; I was whiskey-ugly all day and all night, and, Mr. Bean, I cannot tell all I did or said; but I am afraid I hurt my wife, and she has crawled away to die; if it is so, I shall tell the truth, and hang for it; I ought to; she was a pretty girl; rosy-cheeked and bright and happy as a meadow lark, when I married her; perhaps I am going to die; I never felt like this; George Bean, can you pray? Oh! God; oh! my mother; do pray for me! Mr. Bean; what have you done to me that has brought me to myself; carried me away back? you, that hate rum, and whom I hated, to come and bring me food, and prove my friend; I can-

not tell the story ; look at the few rails left ; see the miserable bare buttery here ; look at the floors ; look at everything, and then look at me, and curse me for it all ; faded and dying ; wife and all ; oh ! great God, is she dead ? Will you go and ask widow Chubbuck ? I never felt like this before. I want you to go and find my wife, and I want you to stay with me ; I feel afraid ! afraid ! Mr. Bean,” and a terrified expression passed over his face, while a strange light gleamed in his eye, and he shook like a leaf.

“I wish I had some assafoetida, I would give you some ; your nerves are in a bad condition, and when they are quieted, I will go and find out something about your wife, and also get you something to take. I am sure your wife is not dead ; I recollect seeing her in the early morning ; but I am apt to be abstracted ; I give little attention to those I meet. Let me see ; hops are good.”

“There are some in the house.”

“Let us have them,” said George, and Simeon procured them. Hop tea was made and drank, and in a little time George was hurrying toward Mrs. Chubbuck’s ; he entered the door nearly breathless, and answered the inquiries which rose in his own peculiar way.

“Simeon was in need as, of course, I knew he

would be ; his brain has undergone severe action, and I verily believe hyperamia would have ensued had I not gone to his relief ; and now I desire some composition to make him a suitable drink, and if you will let me have a pail of milk, and a little bread for my breakfast, I will take it along.”

“Why, what do expect to do ?” said Mrs. Chubbuck, standing in the centre of the room, as if struck with astonishment.

“I expect to stick to the old ship, and pump as long as my strength allows ; I shall stay with Simeon to-night—he needs me, and I must take some word from his wife ; he is extremely anxious concerning her.”

Mrs. Chubbuck raised a finger of warning, and went to consult with Belinda, who was in hearing distance, and listening agitatedly to the conversation. She returned presently and told George to say to Simeon these words :

“B’lindy came to see me this morning, and she said she was going to keep away from Simeon, and stay with friends, and rest a while, for she could not work any more ; her strength was all used up.”

“That will be a discreet message ; let me see,” and he slowly repeated it, word for word ; then,

with the pail of milk, and his pocket filled, he left them, not forgetting to take along the second book of Euclid, saying, "I may have to watch, instead of sleep, and I can as well be entertained as not."

"What a queer performance," said Mrs. Chubbuck, as she looked after his retreating form, and Violet added, "he is a practical Christian, and believes in work as well as preaching. I wonder when he will ever be appreciated!"

"Never, this side of Jordan," was the emphatic reply; meanwhile, George was hastening toward Simeon's, who was only too glad to receive him; his face was flushed and he complained of pains in his head.

"Well, Simeon," said George, "I am going to stay with you all night," and after delivering the message Mrs. Chubbuck sent, he added, "I have made up my mind to help you out of the ditch, and we will banish the trouble and sorrow that the bottle has brought, and fix up the place, too. You have some woodland with the little place, have you not?"

"Yes, sir; but you see the place is as good as gone, woodland and meadow, and the little shanty. It is only twenty days we have to stay here."

“How is that? It may be we can manage it after all.”

“I am afraid, Mr. Bean, your good intentions cannot be carried out, for Deacon Rayne is a hard man, I know, and still I have allowed myself to drink up my house; he took a small mortgage five years ago, and I meant then to do the best I could and get right out of debt, and as God is my witness, Mr. Bean, I should have done better had Rayne not helped me to fall, by tempting me with his whiskey when sober. I worked at the saw mill and, of course, passed his still daily. Many are the times he has stopped me, and treated me, and it was just like starting a fire, after the first taste I could not stop, and was only too glad to accept his offer to trust me and take home a jug of whiskey. It has been running on this way until now, and a few days ago he showed me the account against me, and made out a twenty days' note for me to sign, and the worst of it is, the mortgage is over due. The note I signed was a sort of extra document got up for the occasion; and the fact is, I am homeless, and wifeless, and senseless, Mr. Bean. I wish I could die. Just see Belinda long enough to tell her I am sorry, which never will be any help to her, but relieve me a little, and then die, and——”

“What next, Simeon? I guess, after all, dying only makes us more alive, for it cannot be possible that Deity gave birth to man for this life only. I think we shall go where all our faults and virtues will be known.”

“I hope not, Mr. Bean, for that would be worse than all the rest. If I die I want to be dead, not alive.”

“Ah! my dear fellow, you are just ready to live; but what is the amount of the mortgage?”

“Three hundred dollars.”

“Oh! well, that rejoices me; why, your place, with its good land and timber, is worth twice that, and I should suppose you would have had a larger bill than one hundred dollars for whiskey.

“I should if I had not paid him some cash, and given him a cow and two nice pigs, and the pigs Belinda bought herself; oh! I deserve to be troubled; to go hungry; I am willing to confess it all to you; I am glad to, Mr. Bean; I feel as I used to, when I told my mother of some wrong story I had told. It is pleasure for me to talk to you, although I know there is no help for me.”

“There *is* help for you, Simeon. I will see you out into clear sailing, if you can control your appetite, and the first thing for you to do, is to swear by the honor of your remaining manhood, that

you will drink no more ; never again let the accursed, ruin-distilling cup, pass your lips."

"So help me God, I never will !" and with clenched hands and streaming eyes, that were raised toward Heaven, he made a picture such as angels pause to notice, and the blue eyes of George filled with honest tears, as he reverently said :

"God and angels help you, Simeon, to be a man."

Stars were never brighter in their light than now, and the full, round moon, threw in her smile upon the bare pine floor, at the feet of these two men, as for an hour Simeon sat, with his head in his hands, wrapped in his rising thought, while George turned almost prayerfully to the problems in Euclid, and the clock in the corner tolled ten, ere they were aware of the time. Then the two went to rest together, fidelity to truth, and a newly awakened sense, sleeping as brothers, 'till the dawn.

CHAPTER VI.

HE thought of Belinda's being away was not one that administered comfort to the heart of Simeon. He could but accept the fact of her absence, however, and determined to try, and, with the help of George Bean, become a man once more ; daily receiving assurance of her return when everything was right, and while, if it was necessary, George could evade the statement of unwelcome facts in this case he was straightforward, and gave direct answers to all of Simeon's questions.

“Do you know where my wife is?”

“I am not sure that I do not; but I depend on you to bring the day of her return near. She cannot come to you until you are able to receive her, and bestow proper care upon her. You must not question me further, but rest assured I can persuade her to return to you at a proper time.”

“I will try and do right; but it is lonesome enough here.”

“No doubt about that, still I shall continue to look after you;” and he proved it, for every night

found him walking an extra mile in order that Simeon might not yield to the temptation offered by the still; and the only reward he asked was the continued temperate condition of the man who was well worth saving. During the first week of Simeon's soberness and work, George was maturing the plan of attack on Deacon Rayne, to the end of securing the place, upon which the mortgage was soon to be foreclosed. The evening of the seventh day seemed to make perfect the plan. He was sitting at the supper table, and bringing his fist down with such force as to cause a general rattling of the dishes, and an involuntary starting of those about him, he exclaimed: "I shall walk up to him like a man, go right straight into the thickest of it at first, and then work out by the road which is most available!"

"What on earth are you talking about?"

"Ah! exactly," he said, dreamily; "that is the very way to do. Yes, yes, my dear sister. Well, I shall now go over to my repentant brother, with whom I shall tarry through the night, for the snow is deep, and it is hard tramping."

"Yes, and you are half sick with cold now. I was just making up my mind to give you a sweat. You've no business to go over to Simeon's to-night; good land, I believe you take more pains

to look after him, than you would to find a wife!"

"I shouldn't wonder if I did," was the reply, and he took his hat and a roll of papers.

"Well, if you go, George, put on this overcoat and some mittens."

"Oh! mother in Israel, let me alone; I shall not be injured," and he departed.

"Anybody would think he was crazy," said Millie.

"He is crazy good," pleaded Violet; "oh! how little you can know about such a man as that; and his language is so beautiful and always correct. I cannot see how he has acquired so much."

"I'm glad you understand him, Vilit, for I can't tell half the time what the words mean; I kinder compare 'em with the rest of his talk, and get along that way. I wish he'd keep a little quiet. He's got more plans afoot now than three men ought to tend to for a year ahead. Good land! I never did see such a man in all my life; nobody else ever did. I'll help him all I can, and if he can do anything with Simeon he will deserve the blessing of men and angels. I declare! I do feel mean enough to think I wouldn't help him in the beginning. If Simeon had

starved I never should have forgiven myself," and the face of the patient Belinda flushed, as within her struggled the hope and fear which their remarks occasioned.

None knew how hard it was for her to sit and think, through these days, of the comfort which had been denied her; of her earliest days, and Simeon with his young, bright ways; the long walks and talks that were never so dear; their marriage, which occurred in sunny June; the blessing of the dear old grandfather, who endowed her substantially, and the venturing out upon the tide of life with a fair promise of making a harbor; then the first light clouds that came, the cold hand of a secret fear that held her heart in its beating; the revealment that came at last, when Simeon for the first time entered the hitherto tidy cottage in a state of beastly intoxication; when mustering all her strength she helped him to his bed, and then lost her consciousness, to lie for hours with none to watch save the helpful angels near, the slow coming back to life, and the strange sensations that crept over her, the clouded sight, and then Simeon's waking from the horrible nightmare of delirium, the promises he made, the shame he felt. Oh! how like a panorama before her spread the pic-

tures, all too real. And after all she said to Mrs. Chubbuck, "It will be easier for me to die than try to live, for it cannot be that he will ever be different—death is too near, his flowers are blasted, his feelings killed by frost. Poor Simeon! if we had never come here into so much temptation—the still has been his ruin."

"There, there! B'lindy, now be still," urged Mrs. Chubbuck, "you are weak and nervous, and you have just got to a place where you must stop, so this gives you time to think, but I really begin to have hopes of Simeon, and you needn't worry over losing your place, for George told me in secret last night that he knew he could save it. I can't tell how, but he knows, and there's one thing about George Bean, he always brings everything around that he starts for."

You might as well undertake to stop the north wind blowing, as to stop him when he gets started. Now don't you worry, it won't be long before you'll be better, and in your own home."

"Oh! if I could believe it," and she sank back in the old rocker, which had been cushioned anew with especial reference to her lame side, whiter almost than the pillow at her head. Tears gathered in the eyes of her good friend, who thought as she looked in her face, what a good

looking girl she must have been, and she prayed earnestly for strength and comfort to rise again, saying aloud to herself, "He that seeth in secret shall reward openly."

Different scenes in separate places this winter evening were like rays of light converging toward a common center, and while, in her own way, good Charity Chubbuck upheld the faltering strength of Belinda, George Bean talked earnestly and long with Simeon.

"I have it all arranged in my mind and shall open my batteries Monday morning. I expect the deacon will growl and snap at first, and in many superficial ways attempt to discourage the effort. Then when he finds I am really in earnest, he will grow wild at the prospect of a loss of that which he feels is so surely his. He will denounce me in the vilest terms, threaten me with the disgrace of being turned out of the school, and in the end I shall gain the case, keep the school, and keep right on robbing the deacon of customers for his miserable liquors," and he laughed heartily. Simeon looked in wonder at his friend, whom he daily prized more and more.

"You talk as if certain of the results, and I wonder at it, Mr. Bean. If you had money I should know you could accomplish everything ;

but the deacon is the hardest man in the world to do anything with, and without money I cannot see the prospect which seems to be so real to you."

"I have measured my man, Lieutenant. I realize the exact dimensions of his small soul; he is neither truthful or valiant, and may the Lord be praised! I am, in my own mind, well assured that the sword of a real conviction will vanquish the apparently powerful opponent, and the fact of his ignorance; the real condition of the man whets the axe with which I shall decapitate him," and, warming with the expectation of a victory, he preached a sermon whose moral fell into the good and waiting soil of Simeon's aroused consciousness of right and duty.

"I tell you, Simeon, we are too afraid of these fellows; the miserable Satan that walks constantly among us, is the broad-shouldered, high-heeled god of ignorance, whose parts are re-cast among men, and, like crows who are frightened at the figures set up in the corn field, men flee in fear when there is no necessity for it, and it only needs real backbone to run into and demolish all the moral and social evils of the world. There is no reason why you or I should bow to the will of a deacon, or a layman, because he has more of the

filthy lucre than we ; the value of money is a technical one ; it is a consideration for value received. A desideratum that should be measured by its power as a commercial agent ; not as a decisive existence ; a god to whom we bow with less sense than the heathen before an idol. No, sir !” and he brought his fist down with tremendous force ; “No, sir ; I recognize no supremacy in gold, and I dare to beard the lion in his den ; to walk boldly up to the enemy’s front, and I shall succeed, but I desire you to lie low ; no matter what occurs in your presence, or what may be said to you by the deacon—you let me manage it all for you and we will weather the cape in good order,” and he looked questioningly and almost sternly at Simeon, who answered positively, “I will do exactly as you direct, Mr. Bean, for in your success lies my only hope and, of course, I know the one that drives must hold the reins.”

“Exactly,” said George, “but the old cat and all her kittens ! it is already late, and I have done no figuring ; you ought to know better than to prosecute me with such long talks, and now I shall eat an apple and go to bed.”

“You are the funniest man in the world.”

“I am an incomprehensible mass of incongruities. I expect you to reform me, Lieutenant,”

“I should like to know why you call me Lieutenant so often? I never saw even training day service.”

“Every person suggests their own title to me, and yours is predicted upon the fame of the soldier of Gilmanton who left, as I suppose you know, his plough and oxen in the field, mounted his horse and rode away, while his young wife, with her babe in her arms, looked wonderingly over the field, and nervously thought of the battle. You are not ashamed of the title, I trust?”

“Not ashamed, but glad to understand its foundation.”

Deacon Rayne was walking toward his still, early Monday morning, when he met George and Simeon, the former greeting him with exceeding suavity, taking his hat entirely from his head, saying:

“Ah! here is the Deacon himself; the very man of all others to see at the present moment.”

“Well, well, what now, George?” and Deacon Rayne changed uneasily from one side to the other, and looked askance at Simeon, who, although desiring to move forward, was given, by George, to understand that his presence was desirable.

“Well, Deacon, the fact is that our friend Sim-

eon here is troubled, and you and I must help him along ; perhaps we had better go with you to the still, for we shall have to use a little time to talk this matter over," and he turned as if about to retrace his steps, when the deacon broke in with :

"Look a here ! I can't give any time to you for a confab. I've got some things that must be 'tended to, and so far as helpin' folks goes, I've got about all I can do to 'tend to myself ; and you, George, hain't got any time to spare, if you 'tend up to school as you oughter."

Throwing back his head, and plunging his hands into his ample pockets, he looked the Deacon squarely in the face, and put the question :

"Have you, as yet, detected me in trying to defraud the town of time, or proper attention to the pupils in my care, for whose tutorage I receive so sufficient a reward ? Tell me, Deacon, have you any fault to find with me ?"

"No, no, George, didn't mean I had," and he drew his small head down into his shoulders ter-rapin like, "but you're naturally a kind-hearted feller, and very apt to try to help everybody. I must go along," and he started forward.

"Hold on ! Deacon," and George sprang in his path. "I tell you I am in earnest ; there is no delaying justice in this matter, and now unless

you say I shall not go into the room at the still, (and the Lord knows I would rather talk to you anywhere else,) I shall accompany you thither or, if you prefer, go to your house ; and if you have matters which have your promised attention, I will wait as long as you desire—wait all day if you say so.”

“Seems to me you’re mighty pussistent ; I wonder who’ll teach school if you wait all day for me to talk to you.”

“Never mind that, Deacon ; when you and the committee perceive that I am incapable, or that the school suffers from any lack of attention on my part, discharge me at once ; until then, give yourself no uneasiness concerning my affairs ; but which course shall we take ?”

“I’m going to the still,” sullenly replied the Deacon, darting an angry glance at Simeon, who stood boiling over with rage, yet trembling with fear and, lest the fumes of the still should annoy him, George, in his kind wisdom, said :

“Well, I will go with you, and the Lieutenant can go on to his work,” not forgetting to cover Simeon with a hopeful and encouraging look, as their eyes met.

The two men walked along slowly, George talking easily, and with great hope regarding Simeon.

“ You see, Deacon, the hardest feature in the case is the prospect of his losing his place ; why he really believes you will take it from him, although I have constantly insisted that a man of your means, and one who is bound by the laws and love of the church, by the very mantle of your Deaconship, to not only respect the rights of another, but insist upon their maintenance ; I say I have assured and re-assured him that this unwarrantable sacrifice would not be asked. To be sure, the place is not worth a great deal, but it is his home, and the chance to redeem it would be the very least that even an unchristian and selfish man could accord him ; of course I know, Deacon, you are not going to distress the man,” and, together, they entered the still.

Two or three customers were waiting with their barrels of cider, which must be resolved into winkum, and George overheard a whispered remark as he entered, which did not speak well for the Deacon's good name.

“ I tell you if you want pure winkum, you must hang 'round. The infernal old cuss will cheat us if he can, and give us rot-gut. I tell you to hang 'round.” “ Aye ! aye,” whispered the friend, and at once the business arrangements were made with the voluble Deacon, who was blandly polite and

all attention. George sat musingly on a wooden chair, with his eyes on the floor, ears wide open, and his soul filled with conflicting emotions. The business arranged, the cider deposited, and leaving John, the still boy, to attend to his duties, the Deacon came and sat by George, anxious to have the talk over, and evidently not desiring company all day.

“ Well, now, George, what is it about Simeon ? ”

George drew a long breath and, swallowing the truths that knocked at his soul's door for a hearing, trying to forget all, save the great need of Simeon, he began his plea in a quiet, low tone, such as the Deacon could hardly give him credit for. It arose from the enforced convictions, together with a careful survey of the premises, and carried to the heart of the listener a power which was felt.

“ The first point is to settle the fact in the mind of Simeon, that you will not foreclose the mortgage in ten days, as he expects ; in short, that you will join with me in a good work, and while I am helping him to withstand the temptation of liquor, you will be of great service, in taking a new mortgage on the property, predicated on a long note ; *that* will be your part, and it is a great blessing to realize you are able to do it with-

out any inconvenience to yourself and, thereby, avert an untimely sacrifice, and one which would be likely to end in the complete ruin of the man," and the sharp, clear gaze of honest eyes were fixed on the man who was, at that time, under the strictest surveillance. He felt the glance that pierced his very soul; felt as if the secrets of years were being told; the skeleton of his miserable, dishonest dealing, taken from its dark closet, and re-strung on the wires of a dissecting thought, and he involuntarily shuddered; as if he really heard the bones of the skeleton striking each other, as the process went on; a sigh escaped him; tighter and tighter he clenched his hands, as deeper settled the unwelcome existence, and nearer to him crept the inevitability of the hour.

Truly, the angel of the Lord had accompanied George, and stood beside him as he waited a reply to his proposal. It was hard enough for the Deacon to gather his words; he was taken by storm, and George watched the muscles of his face, reading, with both ease and pleasure, the tale they told, and he said to himself: "Two shall put ten thousand to flight." A clearing of the throat, and the silence was broken.

"I've know Simeon a long time; yes, yes, longer than you, George—knew him; tried to help

him before—'taint no use," and he drew a sigh—a long breath of thankfulness that Satan could tempt even the child of the father—a victory on the wrong side, and the door of his heart closed, with a sharp bang! as the sentence fell from his lips.

"But you do not really intend foreclosure?"

"I'll sell the mortgage if you want to buy it; yes, yes, sell it and take a leetle less than the whole amount."

"What was the amount of the original note?"

"Original? I suppose a note's a note."

"You cannot hide the fact from me, or in any way gainsay the truth, that you have had occasion to change the tenor of the original, or first note, if you please to call it so, and I ask the simple question, 'What was the amount of the first note?'"

"H'm! you are goin' to turn lawyer, be you? Well, you had better show me your ticket."

"I have an inalienable right to defend my brother."

"Don't holler so," interrupted the Deacon.

"I shall use my own mode of expression, and articulate as forcibly as I please; for I am about my Master's work, and am not afraid," and the

Deacon winced under the stern glances of his superior.

“You needn’t get mad, George. The note was for two hundred dollars; clean money that I hauled out of my wallet to help Simeon pull through.”

“Well,” and George’s voice took a low key, “what occasioned the addition? I understood Simeon to say it was three hundred dollars.”

“Yes, yes; three hundred dollars with interest.”

“What did I understand you to say the additional hundred was for?”

“I guess I didn’t say. H’m! I ’spose anybody that knows Simeon would expect that he has needed help more’n once.”

“Very likely; but that hardly answers me. I want to understand this thoroughly; things look somewhat cloudy.”

Deep water all around the Deacon, and no hope of making shore easily; tide coming in, instead of going out—listeners near—what should he do? poor fool that he was, and no strength within to make him brave. Meanwhile, George waited, with knitted brows and piercing eyes, that grew each moment more of a torture.

“I don’t know as I’ve got time to set here and

answer questions ; guess I must go to work.” George rose to his feet.

“By the gods ! Deacon Rayne—”

“Tut ! tut, there ; don’t swear.”

“Hold your peace ; I do swear by the eternal truth, to fight in the defence of right and justice, and to think one moment of the accursed position you force me to take, arouses my just indignation. You, a Deacon ! of the church of Christ ! a man who gives vent to long prayers which, though ungrammatical, would reach the throne of God if they savored of sincerity ; you, who pretend to believe the words of Him who said to the Magdalen, ‘go, thou, and sin no more !’ who left for men a prayer to utter, which reads, ‘forgive our trespasses,’ &c., to stand here, as I am obliged to to-day, crying for justice ! simple justice ! for one of God’s own children ! for a man who knows more than you, Melancthon Rayne ! one who was the love of his mother ; the pride of his father ; a beloved child, and a bright, young man, who led a fair wife to the altar, and came here among us, to live an honest life ; to raise a brood of his own.

“Oh ! my God, Deacon, to know that you have been the instrument, in the hands of the spirit of evil, to know that, notwithstanding all your piety, your long prayers in behalf of the fallen, you have

tempted this man ; allured him by the accursed product of your still from the path of rectitude ; made of him a slave to his cups ; a vagabond in society ; killed all the buds of hope upon the vine of his wife's love ; left them to starve and die, and now the perfect ruin is well nigh accomplished, and the wife is obliged to flee for her life ! leaving her husband to awake from his terrible delirium, to a breadless pantry ! and a desolate fire-place ! with no money to buy food ! no wood to burn ! and worse, no friends to raise him up in this hour of desolation ! This is the picture you have drawn ; aye, it is written with blood and a woman's tears ; with physical blows, and lighted by the feeble flame of her palsied hope."

The listeners came nearer, tears stood in their eyes ; the Deacon felt as if the flames of hell were rising near, and he raised his voice to expostulate.

"Keep still, Deacon, let me tell all ; let me crown the picture I have drawn with the attitude of defiance you take to-day. Standing aloof, you sneer at my entreaty to save not only this man but you, from the eternal damnation you firmly believe awaits the ungodly.

"It was I—yes, I, a poor man, the odd man in Hyde, who has no time to polish his boots and

walk over the prostrate forms of the fallen; I! who curse the cider and the winkum; I! who am willing to bear your curses in return, forgetting not the words of Jesus: 'Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you falsely for my sake,' I went to Simeon in his dark home, carried food and made a fire, stayed all night with him and braved the menacing blue devils who were so near him through that night, fought a good fight and won the victory; held his trembling hands, quieted his throbbing brain, and with the help of God, who doubtless gave Simeon's own blessed mother as a guardian to watch with me over her boy, brought him again to himself. He appreciated it, and wonderingly said to me, 'He whom I thought was my enemy is my best friend.' More than this, he is desirous to stop drinking: I have walked home with him nightly, fearing lest you should tempt him when he passed your still; and now, Deacon, what does all this mean? You refuse to answer my plain question. Why? why?" and his eyes flashing fire, blinded the bewildered Deacon; "let me answer it myself. One hundred dollars of the amount due you is a whiskey bill! It was not enough to call an honest and hard working man into your still and offer him a draught of hell, but when the fire was

kindled—which you knew you could easily start—you offered to trust him, and filled a jug for him to carry home to his wife.”

“Oh, Deacon! God be merciful to you. I am only stating facts; day after day the road has been steadily travelled, you have counted the footsteps of his descent, tracked with blood and your own infamy, and now, now! when the last day comes near, when nearly every rail is taken for fuel! when his wife lies sick and unable to do no work, and he, with his newly aroused sense of honor, duty to his God, himself and his fellows, asks through me for the pitiable extension of the mortgage on his place, you sneeringly answer ‘you’ll sell it if I want to buy.’ Great God! where are you? are you forever steeped in the deathly, damning fluid you deal out to men?” and George paused, standing erect, and looking all he felt.

His words were powerful—the picture vividly, awfully real. The door behind him opened slowly, and Simeon himself entered.

“Mr. Bean, heaven bless you! but ask not for me. I knew before you came, the cold heart you had to deal with, and I came back to tell you not to try. It will only hurt you, it cannot help me,” and he fell on his knees before his friend, bowed

his head to the floor, and cried aloud, "God help me! no man save this one ever will; oh! if I could pray."

Tears came into the blue eyes, then a hand was laid upon the form of the stricken Simeon, and up spoke one of the listeners, Abel Bent, "I'll help you, Sim., don't give up."

"Me too," said Mr. Loomis, and going towards him, they stood with the tears coursing over their faces, choking when they would speak, until at last Mr. Loomis, known as the Squire, laid a hand on George's shoulder and said:

"George Bean, you have opened to our sight the real facts in our midst, and I thank you. I have never drank to intoxication, but I have some secret suffering which I may not reveal. I use my cider brandy only as a medicine, but even this will hardly give me comfort now. It is a fact; we are blind. I fear I must, if I live to be an old man, see the sorrow which lurks in the wine-cup. Let me be your friend and Simeon's."

"Amen," said George, in a voice filled with emotion.

"I hain't nothing to say for my own behavior, but as there is a God, a Heaven, I'll be your friend, and never ask you to drink a drop again,

Sim.," and Abel Bent laid his hand on Simeon's head, who, looking up, said :

" Say you'll never drink any more."

" I'll try it, but I can't swear—I daresn't."

" Oh ! you will gain help, Abel."

" So be it, Sim.," and the prostrate form of Simeon raised to its full height, stood beside his friends, and riveting his eyes on the Deacon, said slowly :

" Deacon Rayne, may you never be dealt with as you are dealing with me, and may I fall dead if ever again I enter this old still," and he turned from them all, saying as he passed through the door, " I go to my work with the blessing of my new, true friends."

The Deacon was paralyzed with wonder. It could have been borne easily had there been no others near, since the right of way would have been entirely usurped by the mean, low spirit which covered him so entirely ; but to be taken in this way, what on earth could he do ? and as he thought perplexedly, the voice of the agitator was heard :

" What are you going to do, Deacon ? shall you foreclose ?"

" No," he growled.

" So far, so good ; but how long time will you give him ?"

“As long as any decent man wants.”

“Very well, Squire Loomis is a man of property and decency also, let him decide.”

“Let him if he wants to; it’s a wonder you didn’t hire a dozen more to hear you.”

“Never mind that, the Lord brings help to his own. What do you say, Squire?”

“Ten years is good time for a decent man; a rascal can turn quicker, and would need less.”

George laughed. “What do you say to that, Deacon?”

“Fix it up to suit yourselves; I don’t want such a h—l of a mess.”

“I am very much afraid you will swear—well, what is the amount?”

“Three hundred and fifty-nine dollars and twenty-three cents.”

“Exact figures, but you are going to throw off the interest, I hope.”

“No, I ain’t,” snapped the Deacon, and Abel Bent came to the rescue.

“I’ll pay it myself; I can do it well enough if I stop taking my daily dram.”

“Bravo!” cried George.

“I will share the amount,” said Squire Loomis, putting his hand into his pocket.

“You make an all-fired fuss; I can throw it off

I s'pose." Ah! he knew the bent of true policy after all.

"Good for you, Deacon. Now we'll make out a new note;" and forth came the irrepressible pen and ever ready inkstand. "I can write on a chair."

"I'll go up after Sim.," said Abel.

"Go on," said George, and proceeded to draw the note.

Abel returned with Simeon, who signed the paper, standing outside the door, and Abel Bent and the Squire witnessed it.

This completed the business of the morning, and as George took his hat to depart, he said:

"I will now go over and tell Brother Perkins why I closed the school for a half day."

"You needn't tell your caper all over town; I shouldn't think you'd want everybody down on you."

"Never mind about me, I am willing to meet all necessary emergencies," and with a look of unutterable contempt the philanthropist departed, leaving Abel and the Squire talking things over out of the Deacon's hearing.

"Ain't you darn glad you waited," said Abel.

"I am," replied the Squire, "God help us all; there are too many victims in this section."

CHAPTER VII.

SQUIRE Loomis was thoroughly awake to the goodness, of George Bean, and when he rehearsed to his family the scene at the still, he was loud in his praises.

“I admire the man; he is not only filled with grand ideas, but has the power to face the enemy; to boldly stand his ground; and, as he expresses it, fight single-handed, which requires no little courage, moving, as he does, in direct opposition to the masses, and only the most powerful convictions, together with an undue share of wisdom, can urge such a course as the one he takes. Wife,” and his voice fell, a sort of sadness running through his tones, as he finished the sentence, “I wish our Jed. could be under his care, morally and mentally. I would not value a five hundred dollar bill, to have had him heard the still sermon. The time, the place, the surroundings, and all, rendered it the grandest of acting, and it was all real; no sham in it; he brought true tears; I felt that Rayne needed choking; he was nervous enough; but his flinty soul gave no response to the powerful picture drawn from the

depths of human feeling, and it seemed to me the very stones must answer his appeal ; I wish you could have heard him ; yes, I would that all Hyde could have been crowded into that old still."

"Could you get George to teach Jed., that is, if he is willing ? I think he loves to learn and, figures, you know, he is especially fond of," said good Mrs. Loomis, thoughtfully, as before her came the bright eyes of her only son ; "he has been away to school, to be sure ; still, I think George Bean knows much more than Jed."

"I guess he does, wife, and when a good opportunity offers, we will invite him over to supper, and have a talk with him about it ; we must do it before Jed. comes back from his visit to the city."

"I hope he will not stay much longer," said the mother, "although he is nearly twenty-one. I feel afraid ; my heart cries out constantly, 'keep him from temptation.' Jason, where do you think he got his taste for liquor ? he is all right every way but that."

"Oh ! I cannot tell. We must go over to the school house, and hear the lecture on heads, next week. George says there is a lecturer coming, who can feel out the truth by the bumps on the heads."

"Why, do you believe it ?"

“No; nor disbelieve it, as far as that is concerned; we have no right to produce a belief about something which neither our eyes or brains have seen; might as well try to make out we are Kamschatkians. I am not afraid to venture to look for myself, however; we will go, and now about Simeon; George cannot do alone; he must be helped, and it seems to me, we can collect some money and necessaries, and go down there. I guess George will make a better General than any one else; but one thing is certain, Jude can carry over a load of wood, and a few provisions to encourage the poor fellow. I really expect him to keep sober, and if you feel like it, wife, I will carry you over to Mrs. Chubbuck’s, and you can have a talk with her; you women can fix up some things; get some carpeting, or bedding, or something they need.”

“Belinda had a beautiful striped carpet on her best room, three years ago, when we called there, and you know the best of us rarely have more than two carpets at most.”

“There is not a carpet or a rug in the house, and hardly chairs, except in the little front room; that looks lonely enough. I have looked in at every window purposely.”

“Well, well; I should think we were heathen

instead of settlers in a civilized country. I will go over to Charity's any time."

"Suppose we go after supper then?"

"Very well," and motherly Mrs. Loomis, sat sewing up a long seam in a pair of pants she was making for her husband, while he went after Jude to give his orders. Another star on George Bean's banner; one whose lustre would not grow dim with time. Squire Loomis and his wife were forehanded people, as the saying was, but among the best, morally; and the intellectuality of the Squire was acknowledged; he was looked up to by them all, and by his side, always, walked Eli Perkins; also, John Holbrook who, like Mr. Loomis, was dubbed Squire, and when public offenders were committed in Hyde, they were tried before either Squire Loomis, or Squire Holbrook. Hyde was a town which covered a large area, and looked, from the top of West Mountain range, like a long-limbed youth, stretched awkwardly at the feet of the mother mountains, with head at the foot of North mountain, and feet under the eye of the West. Two large districts lay composedly, through the long years, and the one which claimed George's school, was under the special care of Squire Loomis, and George expressed true valuation of his friend-

liness and influence, when he rehearsed to the people at "Apple Rest," the affair at the still.

"We are in town! the truth has found noble defenders, and now the discomfited Deacon can foam and froth and swear; we're in town! the Lord be praised! hurrah! three cheers for Simeon! and three for Loomis and Bent!" "And three for you!" added Violet, whose eyes dilated with excitement and pleasure. "Oh! I am so glad," and George went in to re-assure Belinda.

"Salvation is sure, my dear sister; look up, and be glad; the desolation of Rachel shall give place to the smiles of the anointed," and, in his own expressive way, he looked upon the patient face of the woman whose heart was feeling the rustling of wings, and daring to believe the dove of hope was really to nestle in her heart again.

"Oh! how good you are, Mr. Bean; what shall we ever do to repay you? poor Simeon; he will be saved; oh! I cannot tell you how thankful I am."

"Never mind, sister; the only way you must try to pay me, is to do just so for somebody else, who may chance to come in your path; that is the proper way for everybody to do."

"I will do it, you may be sure," and at that moment footsteps were heard upon the veranda.

"The old cat and all her kittens!" said George; "here comes my celestial friends; my loyal Brother Loomis and his wife."

"That is a new title," and Mrs. Loomis laughed as she entered, and in her good motherly way, brought a "slice of sunshine," as Violet said, which was not a bad expression, for the warmth of feeling she carried, was something which filled those with whom she came in contact, and the responsive activities of brain and stomach, bring to us, naturally, a realization of physical comfort, with mental pleasure.

Knowing the way, they hadn't paused to knock at the door, and entered the sitting room where Belinda sat, surprising not only her, but themselves.

"Why, are you here?" said Mrs. Loomis.

"You keep still," and Charity Chubbuck raised a finger of warning. "Nobody knows she's here? and if George hadn't been so crazy over his fracas up to the still, *you* wouldn't. He's turned the key in that door about five hundred times in the last ten minutes, and that's how you come to get in."

"Why, you must regard us as friends," said the Squire; "we certainly should not divulge your secret."

“I don’t ’spose you would, but I’ve allus made it a principle, to keep my secrets myself, and not hire anybody to help me. Its the easiest and the safest way, no matter who ’tis that’s ’round ; that’s blunt enough for even Rayne to understand ; but never mind, now you know it all ; we’ll just set here and talk. George, do set down ; you’re turning that key again ; good land ! I’m all in a fluster now.”

“I guess I’ll go and get my celestial work and sit in the corner.”

Violet laughed aloud, and Mrs. Loomis smiled inquiringly.

“He’s a studying planets and things ; that’s what he calls celestial work.”

“Yes,” said Violet ; “he astonishes us with his wonderful statements which, of course, are infallibly correct, and Loomis’ Astronomy is his bible just now.”

“Ah ! that is where my new title arises,” said the Squire, and George entered with a large Atlas and three books, and seated himself on a long, low stool in a corner of the room. In a few moments he was, to all appearance, completely absorbed in his search for stars, and between Mrs. Chubbuck and her visitors, arose a conversation.

“Old Rayne got a good dose, didn’t he ? I de-

clare, I hain't been so glad over anything in ten years ; how lucky, too, for you and Abel to happened there. If George had been alone he'd had a time of it."

"Yes," said the Squire, "I felt at first a little curious, but as George warmed with the subject, and the picture he drew became a thing of life, I felt like rolling up my sleeves to fight, if necessary. I never heard so grand a sermon, and poor Deacon had to drag his feathers in the dust; but never mind, Simeon will be all right," and he looked hopefully toward Belinda, whose eyes were filled with tears, and Mrs. Chubbuck took one of her hands, chafing it gently, she said :

"B'lindy's tuckered out ; but she's gaining now a little every day."

"Take courage," softly spoke Mrs. Loomis ; "we shall not let you or your husband want ; my husband has sent a load of cord wood, and some provisions to him to-day ; we have more hams than we can possibly use ourselves, and plenty of vegetables. I put in some parsnips with the rest ; does he like them ?"

Her head bowed in answer, as thick and fast the sobs came, and over her cheeks ran tears.

"Do not feel so badly, Belinda ; you will never get strong enough to do your own cooking, if you shed so many tears."

“I cannot help it; they are more for joy than sorrow, and I think, too, about some one’s cooking for Simeon. He is all alone, you know, and he needs me now. I cannot wait much longer.”

“You won’t have to, B’lindy. I told you so this morning,” and Mrs. Chubbuck crowded back the sympathetic drops which rose to her own eyes and, with a face of perfect composure, whose lines were a revelation of her character, she turned the conversation.

“Be you a-goin’ over to hear the bump preacher?”

George screamed aloud. “Sister Chubbuck! you mean to say a professor of phrenology, the master of a phrenological science, which is no more or less than a revelation regarding the capacity and activity of man’s brain, enabling us to hold in our hand, as it were, the framework of the mind.”

“There, you study your celestial thing and let me alone; you said he felt his way over the bumps, and if he does he’s a bump preacher. I don’t care how much he knows about framework or brains, I want to hear him talk; I ain’t afraid; be you, Squire?”

“I should not think there was cause for fear. We know that we are ignorant, and the best of

us know very little, in comparison with what there is waiting for us to understand.”

“We are fools,” uttered George.

“I s’pose we are ; I thought George had gone crazy the other day when he said there was a planet thirteen times bigger than this earth of ours, and I can’t feel the understanding of any of these things he says about stars.”

“Nevertheless, Saturn exists, and her circumference is amply attested.”

“There you be again with your long words, I shall have to give up, that seein’ is believin’, and take things for truth that I know as little about as I do about the Israelites.”

The condition of things was not propitious, so far as the errand of the Loomis’s were concerned, and with a woman’s tact, Mrs. Loomis asked liberty to go into the kitchen and warm her feet in the stove oven, albeit the ample fire-place radiated its living warmth, and the stones of the broad hearth were solidly hot. When out of hearing she said :

“I want to talk with you concerning Belinda and Simeon ; Mr. Loomis is going to collect some money for them. He has drawn up a paper and headed the list with \$25.00 ; Eli Perkins will give

as much more, and I should not wonder if he raised enough to nearly lift the mortgage."

"Good land of liberty! ain't that good! but see here; don't tell George, for you know his pay is just nothing, and he gives every cent he can spare to his mother. If he should see that paper he'd sell the shirt off his back to put something down, and I think he's done enough."

"I should say so; I'll tell Mr. Loomis what you say, but now I want to get some linen and flannel, and a blanket or two, and some dishes, and whatever they need in the house, and I thought you could advise me how to do it, I can give them some things out of my pantry as well as not, and I have a nice wool-filled bed covering, and an extra large plaided blanket, with ten yards of flannel, and twice ten of linen, and——"

"Don't say any more; I should think you'd stocked 'em up without any help from any of the rest of us. What can any body do when you get through? There might be a corner left for a tailor's goose."

Mrs. Loomis smiled. "Oh! they need so much; a carpet and some rugs, and very likely some pots and kettles; there is no end to the little things, you know."

"That's true; Mr. Chubbuck used to say that

et cetera meant a monstrous deal, and took up lots of room in the world, besides costing a great deal ; but I can give 'em a carpet as well as not, and never know it, and as for rugs, I'll set the girls to cuttin' and stringin' rags, and when sewin' meetin' day comes I'll go over and touch up the women a little, I ain't been in so long they'll know something's up, and if they don't suspect it I'll tell 'em I come on purpose to start up sympathy. There's some good ones among us, and some that's just like empty cider barrels that are hooped and look well with good hard wood spigots, that you can turn through all eternity, and never get a drop. Human sympathy gets lost in the woods sometimes."

"Hoot, toot, toot, whee!" sang out on the air.

"What's that?" and Mrs. Loomis jumped from her chair.

"Hoot, toot, toot, whee!" and the voice came nearer.

"You needn't be scairt ; hain't you heard our foolish Eben holler ; he allus blows his own whistle to let us know he's comin'. Poor boy ! that swimming notion he had was a sorry one for him, but he's clever and harmless."

“Hoot, toot, toot!” and the kitchen door opened.

A tall, angularly developed figure, in a muffler and great coat, with long boots, into which his pants were securely tucked, a brown fur cap drawn over his face and ears, left only room for the broad smile which beamed from the face of the idiot, as he stood bowing and scraping to the two women. Mrs. Chubbuck accosted him with,

“Take a chair, Eben; how’s your folks?”

“Ma’s pooty well; pa’s pooty well; anybody been ’round to-day?”

“’Round where?”

“Been ’round; Eben’s pooty well, got wood to cut; cow to milk,” and he grinned foolishly.

“He’s got some news,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, under her breath; “something’s wrong somewhere.”

“Tell us something, Eben; you’ve got a secret.”

“Hoot, toot, toot, whee!” under his breath, and off went cap and mittens.

“That’s it; now you’re goin’ to tell it, ain’t you?”

He looked about him as if there was something lacking.

“You want a doughnut, don’t you?”

“Eben like doughnuts, Eben like gals.”

“Well, I’ll get you a doughnut, but you must tell me the story, will you?” and she looked sharply at him, and turned to the pantry.

“Eben’ll tell,” and he bowed his head, waited as anxiously as a child for the doughnut, which he grasped eagerly.

“Take one bite, and then tell.”

That bite was a large one, still he obeyed the command, and before it was fairly out of his throat commenced calling :

“John down to still—old Rayne—old Rayne—hoot, toot, toot, whee!” and he jumped so high his head touched the wall, and he fell into his chair, fixing his dead, fishy eyes on the ceiling, as if in wonder at the blow.

“Something is wrong at the still,” and George looked in the direction of his hat.

“Here, Eben ; here’s a cent,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, “now tell ; is John hurt?”

“Didn’t hit him, didn’t hit him, and his feet came up, he lost his poise and tumbled heels over head onto the floor.”

“Eben, what ails you?” sternly said Mrs. Chubbuck, “tell us what you mean.”

The idiot felt the power of her eye, and said slowly, and with apparent effort to tell the truth :

“John ain’t hit; Rayne can’t, Rayne can’t——”
(Long pause.)

“Go on, Eben. Can’t what?”

“No; not can’t what—can’t get up.”

“The Deacon is hurt, is that it?” asked George.

“Um,” and Eben nodded. “Um, broke foot.”

“I shall go over then.”

“Me go, me go; Eben go to get the Squire; hurry up, hurry up.”

“There now, he’s told it; good land! anybody might die forty times over. They sent him here after Squire Loomis.”

“I will go right along,” said Mr. Loomis, buttoning up his coat; “come George, come Eben, we may want to send you after a doctor, you’re such a hand to despatch business.”

“I guess it’s a judgment on the old hypocrite; George is most a fool to go right over and help him, after gettin’ such a dressin’ down. He’s past all believin’, I don’t think anybody will ever understand him exactly. Well, now, we’ll finish our little plan about B’lindy, and then I’ll get tea.”

“Not for me, Mrs. Chubbuck.”

“No, but for all of us. They’ll have to stay till midnight, perhaps. Poor Mrs. Rayne! if he hain’t broke his neck she’ll have a hard time. If

he has the funeral can't last long ; and as for mournin', I believe if the poor soul was left to herself she'd feel as glad as a slave to get out into freedom."

The Deacon was in great need of help. His groans were audible before they reached the still. "Oh, Lord ! oh, Lord !" he cried, "help ! help !" John, the still boy, was frantic, nearly, walking to and fro, waiting for some one to appear, and when he heard the sleigh he ran with delight to the door.

"Oh ! come in, come in, the Deacon's broke his leg, and I can't move him an inch. He wouldn't let me leave, he felt so 'fraid to stay alone. I thought nobody'd ever come."

"Which leg is it ?" said George, going near the right one.

"Oh ! it's broke, it'll have to be cut off ; oh, Lord ! oh, Lord !"

"I hardly think it is broken ; let us see," said George, and stooping at his feet, he said to the Squire :

"Hold your hand against his hip, right where the joint lies, press in evenly and gently now," and taking the foot in both his hands he elevated the limb a little, and drew it quickly out ; a sort of a snap at the hip joint, a loud cry from the

Deacon, and George said quietly, that is right, your hip was dislocated."

A grim smile crept over the Deacon's face; he was tired and weakened by the terrible pain, and he knew who it was that had done so great a kindness. Hours must have elapsed ere a doctor could have been summoned.

"Move your toes, Deacon;" he moved them.

"Now draw up the leg a little. Ah! that is it, you are all right; and now we must take you bodily to the sleigh, carry you home, and get a strong wormwood bath for the hip. You are not heavy; the Squire and I can take you right along by making a lady chair, as the children say. First we must raise you up, Deacon, and let you stand on one leg. Hold on to John here, who will sit on this stool, and then you can sit down on our hands, and put your arms about our necks: there, don't worry, Deacon, you will soon get over this," and the raising up and seating of the Deacon was accomplished. They put him into the sleigh easily, took him to his home, and George insisted on helping to fix him in bed, and cover his hips with wormwood and cider brandy, before he was willing to go home.

"You go on Squire, if you feel in a hurry," said the philosopher.

“No, no, I will wait for you,” and when Mrs. Chubbuck’s tea was fairly ready, they entered, and took seats at the table.

George could hardly eat, so filled was he with pleasure at his last transaction. “I tell you,” he said, “it was rich, to be able to go there and haul the Deacon’s leg into place ; and when I left him I whispered in his ear, ‘use all the cider brandy you want to, Deacon, upon the outside.’ The triumph is complete ; exactly finished.”

CHAPTER VIII.

LOOK out for that milk, George," cried Mrs. Chubbuck, as he came swinging the well filled pail, and repeating, in tones of exultation,

"The solstice of Winter is past, and northward shall travel the sun, whose eliminated heat warm into life the verdant covering of earth. Ah! the wisdom of nature;" and he crossed the door sill.

"Give me that pail, George; where on earth are you going? the milk belongs in the buttery; you're steerin' for the sittin' room; where's your overalls?"

"There is your milk, my dear sister; I will deposit it safely in the appropriate place."

"Well, where's your overalls? I'll bet you've lost 'em."

"There is the milk," and he turned to go through the kitchen.

"Here, wait a minute; you've spilt a quart of it on your pantaloons, and it's jest as bad as grease. 'Taint nothing else."

"It is the mother of an oliagenous compound,

certainly; but never mind the trowsers, if I have spilled a sufficient quantity to make a sort of oily covering, it will be of service in helping them to last."

"I should think so; you're as bad as a five-year-old about getting your clothes dirty; don't you know the dust'll settle into this grease, and make long dingy streaks the whole length of the leg? Where's the overalls?"

"I cannot say."

"I'll bet you've lost track of 'em; where did you have 'em last?"

"Out in the yard, milking, and doing chores."

"Well, then, where be they?"

"Sister Chubbuck, the overalls are defunct; they are no more forever."

"What have you done with 'em; used 'em to wad your telescope with, or what?"

"I did not do anything with them; but for your relief, I shall have to confess," and he drew a long breath.

"Let me see; I believe it was about two weeks ago, after I had finished the barn chores, I was searching the heavens, with a view to observing a conjunction of stars, and I sat upon the fence which encircles the pen where the pigs reside, and by a mysterious lurch I fell backward into the sty.

I gathered myself up as quick as I conveniently could; and perceiving that the over-rigging was pretty well soiled, I shuffled it off and scrambled out; renewing my celestial search, forgot to extract the overalls. It occurred to me about a week ago, but I saw no vestige of cloth, and suppose the swine have used them up for bedding."

"Why didn't you tell of it before; I could have made another pair."

"Oh! I thought it was a matter of minor importance."

"I should think it was a matter of decency to keep your clothes clean, if you can. Just as if you couldn't find any place but a pig pen to roost on, and stare the stars out of countenance."

"Ah! my dear sister, you forget that I am run in a different mold from yourself. I'm out of the old rut, and gathering new facts daily."

"Well, I don't forget that I want you to look decent to go to hear the bumps preached on to-night."

Deacon Rayne's hurt did not prove serious, and upon the evening of the phrenological lecture, was on hand early, notwithstanding his declaration that the man must be an impostor.

"He says he'll prove everything he says, and we'll give him a chance, that's what we will."

Mrs. Rayne went with her husband, for a wonder, and sat between sweet Violet and Mrs. Chubbuck.

Professor Rathbun was the guest of Mrs. Chubbuck and George, and entered with the latter, who gallantly accorded him his place on the little platform, moving the school-desk out of his way, and offering him one of the two chairs, took the other himself; and when the audience had fairly assembled, introduced him.

“Brothers and sisters, allow me to introduce to your notice our worthy friend, Professor Rathbun, who has relinquished pecuniary emolument, as well as a position as College Professor, in order to travel about and enlighten people regarding themselves; and we all know that the problem of our physical and mental requirements, individually, is the hardest to solve, and the most necessary to be mastered—‘Man know thyself’—and Professor Rathbun proposes to teach us how to do it.”

Unrolling the large chart, with which he proposed to illustrate his lecture, the Professor acknowledged the introduction in a gracefully dignified manner, and proceeded to explain the organic construction of the brain.

A few of his auditors were able to understand

his well-chosen and expressive language, and were thoroughly interested; while the majority seemed fully persuaded that there must be something funny connected with it; and the fact of their preconception served to render them oblivious to whatever was fitted to their perception, and taking no pains to perceive, they saw nothing, and sat restless, as well as listless, during the lecture.

When a perfect delineation of the chart had been submitted to them, Prof. Rathbun proposed to practically illustrate the truth of his remarks by examining the heads of persons in the audience.

Let us test the science, of which we have been treating, by applying it to individuals. If it is as I have said, the heads of those present are certainly not exceptions to the rule which is found in the book of nature. An old and lasting standard; applicable to men through all time. We must remember that while this appears to you as something entirely new, it is, nevertheless, an old and well attested truth, and to Franz Joseph Gall, a German physician of the last century, we are indebted for the present conception of it. He has left to us a legacy of knowledge, which gives us the key to the souls of men, and craniology will help us to avoid mistakes, while we read those

whom we meet, truly, and dispense no harsh judgment, as before.

“Select some person whom you all know, for examination, and before we proceed further let me ask you to bear in mind, that I shall speak honestly regarding each person; plain unvarnished truth is what we seek, and if I should find, as I generally do, peculiar traits of character, of which to speak, you are not expected to regard them as animadversions, since I am only an instrument, in the hands of science, a tube which the voice of a newly awakened truth penetrates. Let some gentleman or lady volunteer, or a selection be made by the audience.”

George noted, with anxiety, the real condition of the audience; they were not travelling in the right road, and he feared the result, and was nettled to realize that the palpability of the lecture had been lost, and the words gone over the heads of the people, instead of falling into their hearts, as they ought. He had watched their faces narrowly, and could count only six, out of more than a hundred, of whom he felt sure.

No one volunteered, and a sort of suppressed snicker ran through the house.

“Let some one be named,” said the speaker; “one who is well known; give me a man whom you

all understand." "Deacon Rayne," shouted a voice from the farthest corner; "Deacon Rayne," said another; "Squire Loomis," said another; "No, no; Deacon Rayne," and becoming emboldened a half dozen calls were made.

"Quietly, quietly," said the Professor; "I will call the first gentleman named if he is willing."

Up started the Deacon, saying, in a low tone, but audible to those nearest to him, "I guess he knows a sight about me."

The long fingers of Professor Rathbun were moving cautiously over the head of the Deacon, whom he had offered a chair, and the ridiculousness of expression on the face of the subject, was material to keep alive the flame of their mirth.

"This man has a peculiar cranial development. We will begin here at the points of the eye to explain. First: he has little language; cannot find modes of expression readily, and if a little confused or excited, would be apt to ejaculate or stutter almost, saying, well, well, or perhaps venting an individual phrase, while trying to collect words."

A look of surprise on the faces of the audience; an enlarged grin on the Deacon's face.

"Inhabitiveness is largely developed. This man, I will venture to say, lives in the house his

grandfather built ; no other place would suit him as well." Laughter among the audience ; " Right ! " shouted a voice ; George nodded an approval.

" Alimentiveness is large ; he likes good food, and the best way to gain a favor from him is to ask on a full stomach.

" Constructiveness exceeding small, never will invent anything, and if he makes even a wood sled must borrow the plan."

The Deacon knitted his brows ; the audience laughing an approval. " He has large combativeness and little veneration, which is a dangerous fact ; but when I touch the locality of caution and see it largely developed, I come to the conclusion, that outside of his own home this man is not to be feared. He will swear if excited."

" He's a Deacon," shouted a voice, " Deacons don't swear."

" Cannot help it," said the Professor, smilingly ; " a man with small veneration and large combativeness must swear ; he cannot help it if he tries, under certain circumstances ; but he will not use his fists, because his caution comes to warn him of the possibility of getting whipped."

(Loud laughter and clapping of hands.)

" Philoprogenitiveness is exceedingly small ; he does not love children, and——"

“There!” said the Deacon, starting, his face crimson with anger, and shaking his fist at the Professor; “I guess you think I’m a blasted fool, you infernal liar, to set here and be made a—a—well, you’ve got through with me, and you’d better go home.”

“My dear sir, I leave it with the audience whether I have told the truth or not. You should wait till I get through; I have hardly begun.”

“H’m,” growled the Deacon, walking rapidly toward the door, beckoning to his wife as he passed her. She rose obediently, and walked meekly out. Professor Rathbun looked after them, and as the door closed, remarked to the audience:

“The man could not bear the truth. Give me another; let’s have a lady this time.”

Squire Loomis rose, and named ‘Aunt Patty Bean,’ who consented, and came forward.

“Ah! here we have a grandly developed head, one who is original in all ways, and needs more room to turn round in than you can give her in this century and town.

“She is a sweet singer, having a perfect development of time and tune; also a good spinner, possessing much mechanical ingenuity. Love of home and children is strongly developed, and does not hinder her being a practical thinker.

“She will eat to live, instead of living to eat, her alimentiveness being little developed.

“I fear this woman is not in her proper place, for she is fitted for a position which demands integrity of purpose, and activity of intellectual power. She is a noble specimen of a superior woman, and her patience and long suffering will be of great use to her, since it nearly always occurs in this world of ours, that ‘Those who will do, *may*,’ as the old saying runs; and also, those who can bear, must.

“Her combativeness is not largely developed, and she would resist, to some degree, unwarranted efforts against her right to believe and act as she deemed best, and if her husband or children should suffer would do battle in their behalf. People do not suffer from a development of combativeness, so long as it is balanced or its effect neutralized, as it were, by other brain possessions. When a person has both destructiveness and combativeness, then there is trouble, especially if caution be small.

“This woman cannot find many about her who will see things as clearly as she does. The moral faculties are all uniformly developed, and her soul has a strong and pure foundation for eternal thought.

“It may be that the conditions of this mundane existence will fetter her, as it were, and the wings of her thought will not be plumed for the flight she longs to take ; but friends, when you are in trouble, you will find not only a sympathetic friend, but a wise counsellor ; one who is far sighted, with clear business perceptions. She is too generous to accumulate wealth if she has opportunity.

“A great contrast between these two people ; and while an entire evening devoted to this subject would do her only partial justice, I must give you an opportunity for bringing some one else before me.”

“Loomis, young Loomis,” was called, and after a little, consented.

“Here is another good specimen of brain-work.

“The functions of this brain are remarkable for their activity. Not a duty is avoided naturally, and you ought to make your mark in the world, young man.

“You are conscientious, remarkably so ; you will never do others injury, unless it is by ignorantly damaging yourself.

“You are not secretive, hardly enough so for your own good ; outspoken and upright. The

organ of destructiveness is large, and that of combativeness also ; you have, however, the hand of veneration to delay dangerous acts, and you would not be apt to get into trouble by physical combat.

“ If you should see a large youth ill-treating a small boy, you would be apt to chastise the fellow smartly ; but this would be a sense of justice led by impulse, with which you are filled.

“ You are quick to perceive, ardent in your affections ; would have great love for home and friends, and work untiringly through years to obtain comforts for others.

“ You are a mathematician and grammarian and concentrator ; number, order and language being uniformly established.

“ It should not be long ere you selected your course, or rather, turned your attention to the course which your naturally active brain indicates most plainly.

“ The organ of wit is well developed ; also that of comparison. If you choose to be a lawyer you will attain prominence and popularity.”

Then passing his hands slowly over the entire head, he added :

“ One thing I must say to you ; you are over fond of nice food. Your palate is one which has

a decidedly positive life, and if, as I should judge, you may have a taste for cider, let it alone. Think not it is harmless, for with all your strong will and evenly developed brain, your active conscience, the deference you pay to the rights of your fellows, you will nevertheless be a high liver if you have an opportunity.

“Beware of the wine cup, and follow the line of promise which lies straight before you.”

Tears gathered in the eyes of the noble looking son of Squire Loomis, as rising to go to the seat, he said :

“You are a wonder ; ask the audience if you have told the truth about me, I think you have hit it pretty nearly right.”

“Inasmuch as the hour is growing late, we will take the vote of the audience as to the verity of of the examination, and adjourn,” and he turned to George, who rising, put the vote, and not a single nay was heard amid the united voices of of the assembly, since the practical proof had caused a surprise which the least among them must allow.

George passed the hat, and Professor Rathbun left the school house with pleasanter feelings than he had anticipated.


“I think we made a success,” he said, as he walked homeward with the family group.

“Time will prove the truth or falsity of your impressions. Only the precious few really felt the force of your lecture. The majority carried their foolish nothingness with them, and expected nothing but sport. In other words, they went there with their eyes and ears shut, so far as the truth was concerned. I tell you, Professor, the soil is farrow in this region,” said George.

“That is a unique expression.”

“It is a good one. The hearts of the people are anything but tender and productive, so far as real truth and the great importance of it is concerned.”

CHAPTER IX.

E tribes of Adam join!" louder and louder George sang, the morning after the lecture, ringing the changes of the old hymn with his powerfully strong voice. Violet and Milly were convulsed with laughter. Prof. Rathbun laid down the treatise on mentality which he was perusing, and Mrs. Chubbuck stepped hurriedly about, picking up generally, and arranging the work of the day.

The morning chores were finished, and oblivious to all about him, the zealous Philanthropist approached the door with long strides, emphasizing every step with a word of the hymn.

"George," said his watchful friend, "don't you know you'll scare the lecturer to death; he ain't used to such noises."

"What is the matter with you, my dear sister? Paul commands us to be instant in and out of season."

"He never told you to scare everybody to death screaming out the tribes of Adam, as if you were mad."

"It is the tribes of Adam we want; truth is

crucified daily, we need to join in songs that shall awaken us; we need to be so charmed with the living truth, as never to have a desire for error, however alluring it may seem, we should seek no longer to roll delusions as a sweet morsel under our tongue."

"George, you needn't stop to preach a sermon now, you've got to go over to the school-house, and take the lecturer to Squire Loomis', ain't you?"

"The old cat and all her kittens! I came near forgetting it; your supervision is my salvation."

"Whoa!" sounded a voice near.

"Who on earth is that?" said Mrs. Chubbuck, and together they went toward the door.

A span of horses, with a long lumber-box, canvas-covered wagon, containing several people, stood at the gate, and as the door opened a medium-sized woman sprang to the ground, and, entering the yard, walked quickly forward. Addressing Mrs. Chubbuck, she asked: "What kind of a place do ye call this to live in?"

Mrs. Chubbuck was taken aback; and while she waited to think of an appropriate reply, George spoke up positively.

"It is a good place for Christians to settle in; we have a good share of sinners already."

“Aye,” cried the stranger; “I thowt as much; we’s come to settle in the woods; can ye tell us who has wood-land to sell; that’s near the village, if there’s any village to it; we has seen not a store so far, and could you please gie us a bit o’ bread an a sup o’ tea; there’s myself, three gells and brawny John; the auld man of us all.”

“Your husband?” inquired George.

“Mi own good man, John; let us come in, good folks; we’s got plenty to pay; we’s no stealers; neither beggin’ a bite, for we mean to settle among ye, and build us a bit o’ a place while time.”

“Oh! come right in,” said George, and, turning to the rest of the party, the stranger cried,

“Come on gells, come on John;” and while good dame Charity was wondering if there was enough in the larder to make an ample meal, the quartette in the wagon were making their way toward the door.

“Come right in,” said the mother and wife; “these is good folks; never mind about much victuals, good woman, it’s only a bite we need, a bit o’ bread and cheese; and perhaps you’s a little cold codfish;” and she began taking off her things as if among old friends, and walking up to the Professor, said good humoredly,

“You’s e not used to seein’ a tribe fra the West, ye look at me strange, but ye can read folks pretty good; look in our faces and see if we’s e browt evil wi’ us. Take off your things mi lasses; toss them into the corner, and not make trouble for the folks,” and out into the kitchen she flew to warn Mrs. Chubbuck against making herself trouble.

“Fret not, ye good soul, only a bite,” and seating herself with her limbs crossed, revealed stout shoes on her feet, and home knit hose covering her limbs. Her appearance was one that startled the occupants of “Apple Rest,” and as Violet flitted hither and thither, assisting to prepare the meal, she felt herself wonderfully drawn to her, and could not appreciate Millie’s whisper, “she looks like a witch.” No, it sort of hurt her, and she replied positively, “Millie, you are wrong, her eyes are the clearest blue I ever saw; I love her already.”

“You incomprehensible girl,” replied Millie.

“I shall be forced to relinquish the pleasure of a confab with these new friends,” said George, “and go to my post. Duty beckons me to the little red school-house, although inclination would keep me here. Are you going with me Professor?”

“I believe I can find the way over to Mr. Loomis’ alone, and I would really like to stay here an hour or two longer,” was the reply.

“Aye, do,” spoke up the stranger; “and look ye here George, mi dear, do ye teach school?”

“I do,” said he stopping short, and looking surprised.

“Well, see here,” and she approached him as if in great haste, “can ye get me some papers; we’ve been long on our journey, and must read news o’ day. I’ll tell ye my lad, I’d like ye to make a bit o’ a call for us, or write a letther an’ tell the paper printers to send some for a year to John ‘Ardy,” and lifting the skirt of her dress, she took from an under pocket a long leathern purse, and extracted a \$5 gold piece.

“Here, here is the money; five dollars worth o’ readin’; that’ll do to begin with, and if the gells wants books I’ll get all they say.”

“Well,” said George, his face beaming with undisguised delight, “I guess I will not take the money this moment, for I can show you some specimens to-night, and you can select such as you choose. Duke County *Journal* is printed in the city twenty miles away, and is a good paper for news, as well as some common sense; then there are others you may like as well.”

“No, no, mi dear ; take the money now, and then do the choosing when ye get ready. I likes readin’ matter aroun’; it shows us the world moves, and everything is a wheel wivin a wheel, ye see. I can never bear to be only a bit o’ a spoke, which is what I is wi’out a paper, for I know nout o’ anything, save miself an’ the rim o’ the wheel with which I turn. It is right for us all to know as much as we can and, see here, mi dear, I’d like the gells to go to school to you ; who pays ; the folks, or the town ?”

“Oh ! the people generally submit to what they term a school tax.”

“Then ye get betther pay in that way ?

“I hardly know about that.”

“How much do they pay you ? tell me if its no secret.”

“Twelve dollars a month, and board about the town.”

“Does ye work for that willingly ?”

“Yes, I guess I do, though I would take more.”

“So ye shall, ye honest soul ; little Janey and Nancy shall go, an’ I’ll gie ye a dollar a week miself.”

“Oh ! but, my good woman, you will be taxed with the rest.”

“Who cares ! I spends no money on foolish

nonsense ; I wear no silks or satins ; look at mi ! cowhide boots, and I likes them well ; I ha' money enough to pay what's right, and a dollar a week you shall have," and she spatted his shoulder, and turned to the waiting table, saying, "Now for a meal, which we shall take for our stomick sake ; go on to your school, George ; come, mi lasses ; come, John 'Ardy," and seated herself at the table, next Mrs. Chubbuck, who was to wait on them to the bread, cold meat, &c., while Violet poured the tea.

"Gie me a cup o' tea, sweet blossom ; do you live here?"

"For the present," replied Violet, her hand trembling nervously ; "Will you sugar and milk your tea?"

"I will, mi lass ; tell me your name ; it ought to be Lily."

"Violet, not Lily."

"Ah ! that's a heaven-born name ; ye'll come and see us when we gets reddied up for company?"

"Oh ! yes ; I expect we shall be fast friends."

"Indeed we shall ; I'se hurryin' to find the wood land, wi' a bit o' a workin' patch, to go wi' it ; ha' yourselves here, land to sell?"

"I have a large piece of wood land," said Mrs. Chubbuck, "about a mile and a half north-east

of us, but I can't say as it would be what you want. There's a lot of good oak, birch and hickory there, and a sprinkling of hemlocks on one side of it; the stumps are pretty thick, I guess, for the land is considerable old. Squire Loomis owns a handsome piece of meadow land, that runs right along side of my woods, and there's plenty of pretty good land to till, near it too. There's a good many stones in this part of the world; they keep the ploughs rough as old hoes, and its a job to get 'em out in some places."

"Aye, my good dame, this is the very spot for us; I felt it in my soul as we crossed your hill, an' the smoke o' your chimney come to our eyes, that here was a stoppin' place, an' I telled John 'Ardy so, an' the lasses; we'se tired; long days we'se travelled; aye, we'se tired," and she passed her cup to be re-filled.

"Gie me a bit more o' this good tea, an' tell me now where will we go to be fed an' lodged for a bit? It'll take a couple o' weeks, wayn't it, John, to get up a bit o' a cabin for us?"

"Has long, and hit may be longer."

"Well, then, we must find shelter wi' some o' these good folks," and she looked inquiringly into Mrs. Chubbuck's face, while the smile of a possi-

bility crossed her own, as a reflection of a thought which rose within.

The hostess was thinking strongly, and the lines about her mouth grew tense, as her teeth closed on the vexatious questions before her ; she could and she couldn't ; she could and she ought ; yes, the lawyer of reason and love for humanity plead strongly ; the lines in her face grew mobile ; a half smile crept like a ray of sunlight into her eyes, and with one decisive movement, in her chair, she spoke :

“I don't know who you be, nor where you come from, but your faces are as honest as mine, and you deserve to be as well treated as I should, if I was travelling ; I like to be quiet, and I'm used to it ; pretty much all of the confusion we have, George kicks up, and he never moves without knockin' over a chair, or somebody's thoughts, some way. I never see anybody like him, and ef he wasn't the best man God ever made, I shouldn't think I could get along with it always. Well, I'll tell you the facts jest as they are : there's two rooms in the front of the house that you may have, if you'll stay in 'em ; I don't mean for you to be penned up like regular John Bunjan's, but I mean to jest keep out of my way, when I'm a doin' my work. I'll be real glad to talk with you when I

can set down before the fire-place and enjoy it ; but I never could enjoy eating custard pie, when there was mustard plasters to make, and its jest so with visiting and working. Let me get the victuals, and you eat 'em when they're ready. There's a stove in one room and a fire-place in the other, and that settles what I can do."

"What'll you charge us for board, mother?"

"Oh! good land, I don't know; a dollar a week apiece, I guess."

"Nay, nay, that wayn't do; ye shall ha' ten dollars a week for the five. How is that?"

"That's too much; I shan't have it."

"Aye, but ye will, an' John must find a place for his 'osses."

"Oh! well, we've got two empty stalls, and there's hay enough to feed a half dozen extry; that'll be all right."

"An' we'll pay for all the hay that's used. John 'Ardy, what ha' ye got to say?"

"Hamen," he reverently said, bowing his head. The eyes of the girls looked brighter, and little Janey, drew a long breath, as if her young heart felt the moving away of a burden, while the elder expressed her thanks modestly, and spoke much as a mother might, regarding the safety of her

brood. Mrs. Chubbuck looked at her as if astonished, and said :

“I should think you was a girl who took care of things.”

“That she does,” said her mother. “She is the mother o’ us all, an’ when I tries to help her, she pushes me off wi’, ‘ah ! the bother you makes me ; go and seat thyself.’ ”

“And I tell no story, Mrs. Chubbuck ; my mother does everything wrong ; she snarls the thread, and twists the housework ; breaks my dishes, and is as like to set them on the floor about her, as in the closet. She is fit for only——”

“Hist ! thee child ; say nowt o’ Rachel ; ah ! there’s mi name, mother ! call me by it.”

“That was the name of my blessed mother,” said the tender heart, and her eyes overran with tears.

“Our names is John and Rachel ; Ruth, the first born ; Nancy, two years younger, and wee small Janey, only eight years wi’ us ; Janey love, go get thy fiddle from the cart, afore feyther puts up the ’osses.”

“Does she play on a fiddle ?” said Violet.

“Aye, that she does, right well, an’ Rachel sings ; lots o’ songs has Janey, mi darlin’, an’ me.”

“Mother,” whispered the little girl, “ask the lady if I may fiddle a bit while we stays here.”

Mrs. Chubbuck’s tears were chased by smiles, as she answered the question she had overheard.

“Oh! you may, my child, and we’ll be over glad to have a tune; who taught you how?”

The large dark eyes of Janey rested wonderingly on the face of her inquirer as she answered.

“Why, it grows inside o’ me, and I just fiddles it out, as easy.”

“Ah! Janey, so the music does grow inside o’ thee,” and the mother looked proudly upon the pet of the family.

Belinda had not been presented to the visitors; entering the sitting room a moment after they were seated at the table, she had, however, like Prof. Rathbun, been an attentive listener to their conversation, and when Rachel said “wait a bit,” as her husband, John, rose from the table, both approached the open door, in time to see the upturned eyes of the strange woman, and the hands reached forth and tightly clasped before her. From her lips fell thanks, and the scene was most impressive.

Her clear, yet peculiar enunciation, which marked the strange blending of Scotch and English dialect, was a power that riveted their atten-

tion as with great earnestness, betraying depth of feeling she poured forth to the divine ear, the utterance of her spirit.

“Oh! great an’ ever watchful Sperrit, unto thy heart as beats eternally for man, Rachel o’ Michigan breaths a deep breath o’ thankfulness. Thou whose power has lighted the track o’ the wanderer, aye, we thanks thee to-day for this blest endin’ o’ our journey. Light an’ darkness has been ours, we has tread the unsought path o’ the great woods, an’ the Feyther’s angels has been wi’ us all the way. John ’Ardy has realized the touching o’ their hands o’ help. Aye, even unto our wee Janey the power o’ Heaven has spoke, an’ as the long ago men was guided, so has we been. Sperrit o’ life an’ love an’ all things good an’ true, stay wi’ us still, show us again in the nights as is to come, every duty as belongs to us; help us to help ourselves, an’ every hother, an’ let us live here in thy woods at peace wi’ trees, wi’ men an’ wi’ thee, oh, our God!”

Tears had fallen from beneath the quivering lashes as she prayed, and no thanksgiving could have been more acceptable to the tarrying angels than this heartfelt prayer, so eloquent in its simplicity, that the hearts that heard stood still.

Mrs. Chubbuck forgot her anxiety as to the coming dinner hour ; and when Rachel rose, saying, "now we'll go an' set by the fire, an' let the mother o' Charity do her work. Come gells," she sat looking steadily down at the table-cloth, and blaming herself for being so slow to decide as to their stay. The thought disposed of, she started as from a dream, with

"Vilit, can you go and show Mr. Hardy where to put the horses?"

"Certainly," said the dewy-eyed maiden; and a leaf turned in the book of the day.

"You'll have to 'tend to yourselves now," said Mrs. C., putting her head into the sitting-room door, "I've got dinner to get."

"All right," said the Professor, "I am tarrying for my own pleasure; which you will excuse."

"Stay jest as long as you want to ;" and with Millie Dean and the flitting feet of the busy Violet, all things moved on as they should.

The group in the sitting-room was peculiarly attractive in the semicircle before the huge fireplace, whose maple back log upheld a tower of burning wood, which brooded over the glowing coals beneath.

Belinda sat at the farthest corner, in her rocker, and Rachel upon entering seated herself on a low

stool beside her ; then came the three girls, little Janey sitting on a stool, the twin of that occupied by Rachel, on her lap the old violin and bow, which she fondled lovingly, as if it were a dear friend, and as Professor Rathbun took in the group at a single glance, he drew a picture which was hung in the guest chamber of his memory as a fadeless treasure.

Each face spoke the peculiar language of the tenant soul.

Upon the features of Ruth, rested a mingled expression of peace and care, which gave her a subdued, pensive look, and her nut brown hair, tanned cheeks and dark eyes rendered her a girl-woman, and as the Professor scanned her expression, changeful, but tinged with the subdued feeling which belonged only to the middle-aged and old, he thought, "too bad, she has too much resting on her young shoulders."

Nancy was bright and restless, her eyes of blue, and clear white skin, with hair of golden brown, formed a strong contrast to that of Ruth, and the evidence of a more selfish nature, and one which could not brook the restraint which Ruth had always borne, who would be apt to read stories and churn at the same time, looking at pleasure while she kept one hand only on the crank of

duty, caused no sigh to rise for her, but on the contrary a decision, "she will look out for number one," as the eyes went wandering on to rest in admiration on Janey.

The clothing of the three girls was of brown flannel, their short frocks revealing stout English brogans, and hand-knit hose of a greyish color. Janey sitting cross-legged on her stool, with her friend, the violin, lying like a baby in her lap, looked in the fire coals for pictures, and the play of her face was a study. Nature had moulded her face exquisitely. Oval in shape, a small but expressive mouth was of Grecian type, with a forehead broad, and not too high for beauty, arching eyebrows, whose long dark lashes fell over speaking eyes, and its symmetrical outline, crowned with a shapely head, with a covering of jet black curls, made her look like a dark eyed sylph, dropped down among those who were wholly unlike her.

A close examination of the mother, Rachel, however, gave a satisfactory explanation of her relation to the family; and while in eyes and hair she bore resemblance to her father, it was the clear cut outline of her mother's face she wore, and the development of brain was exactly similar.

Rachel Hardy was no ordinary woman ; she had a rare development of spirituality and was living on extraordinary nervous energy, being of medium size, small boned, and angular from thinness.

Her face was fair and white as that of an infant, her mouth delicately curved, her eyes a clear, sweet blue, that made one think of the sky in June ; her forehead like Janey's, and her shapely head, was covered with hair whose brown had melted into threaded gray, with only here and there a touch of youth. She wore it short, and as she sat thinking and talking, her small thin fingers ran restlessly through it. She could not sit quietly ; eyes and hands were in constant motion, and looking kindly into Belinda's face, she said : " Look up, mi dear ; what makes you so down hearted ? there's been trouble a-near, but don't ye werrit, there's summat bright ahead. Look up an' be glad."

Belinda pressed her hand, and the ever ready tears gathered in her eyes.

" Don't ye cry, poor girl ! don't think the sun has gone too far away : day ever hides its head a-near the night ; morning comes soon. Look up, I say, mi dear," and turning suddenly to Prof.

Rathbun, "what kind of a man is you ; a doctor ?"

"What made you think I might be a doctor?"

"That's a Yankee trick, to cross-question instead o' makin' a straight speech."

"Well, then, let me say I have studied medicine, but am not practicing."

"Aye, good for you, there's enough wi'out you to dissect folks while yet they lives ; but what does you do ? there's summat strange about you."

"Tell me about it, Mrs. Hardy ; you are a sort of a witch, I believe."

Her brows knitted ; and throwing a sharp, cutting glance of dislike at the Professor, she said :

"Ye mout think it fun to call me a witch ; but, oh ! never do it more : it's long days I'se borne that title, and I'se no witch at all, but one o' God's women, and I haätes that name ; aye, I haätes it. It's neither good manners nor right ; ye should know better," and crossing her limbs, she folded her hands and looked sternly, and straight into the coals.

"I beg forgiveness, I meant no injury, .good woman."

"Hist, man ! it makes no matter, you're ignorant an' make mistakes ; but what is ye walkin' around the world to read folks' faces for ?" and

her eyes again met those of the Professor's, and ere he could speak, she said :

“ Ye needn't ax me why I thowt it ; I felt ye look at me, an' I'se willin' to hear ye tell me who I is an' all about me, but first let me sa-ay, I thinks ye preaches a great deal more wisdom than ye practices.”

“ Hurrah for the Professor !” and with this salutation, accompanied by a merry laugh, George Bean entered. “ Now for an examination ; let him place his hands on your head, my dear sister.”

“ Aye, I will an' welcome, but he's not the good man you is, George ; you does just as near right as you knaäws how, an' he doesn't,” and she sat as passively as she could while the smiling Professor made his survey of her head.

He pronounced it a wonderful cranium, and told her so truly of her peculiarities that Ruth and Nancy clapped their hands for joy ; and John Hardy, who entered during the talk, sat as if overwhelmed by the surprising recitation of character which bumps revealed so truly.

The diagnosis closed with this sentence :

“ You are a natural doctor, you can set bones, make herbal medicines with perfect ease, and withal, you have an entirely original and inde-

pendent mode in this matter. Hard cases, people with old sores and infirmities of long standing should seek you, as the Balm in Gilead, which is greater, because more natural, purer and stronger than that which is embraced by the medical school. You have inherited this gift from three generations, and it may be even farther."

"How does ye tell so true?" and she turned quickly round on the stool.

"Simply following the laws of a natural science.

"Aye, but ye must know well how to put this and that together, else bumps as high as old Arriarat wouldn't tell ye much."

"Exactly. The power of comparison, and also that of analogous reasoning, must be depended on."

"Aye, I understand ye; but the learning that ould Hingland gie me didn't help me to the great words, like them ye uses; but look ye here! can everybody, lout an' lord, learn to tell the truth as well?"

"Anyone of ordinary capacity can understand it, certainly."

"That's good; now, then, ye tell me nowt that's new, but it's only a different way o' gettin' at it, an all I'se livin' for now is to stay a bit longer wi' mi lasses an' John 'Ardy, and to help folks to

live betther. Don't ye deem it strange that most o' the people in the States is such fools? Why, they rather believe a pretty lookin' an' good-for-nothin' lie any time, than a right hand solid and forever-to-be truth."

"You speak words of wisdom," said George Bean. "The Lord has sent more help to me: glory be unto God! who giveth us the victory."

"Hamen," said John Hardy.

"So be it," said Mrs. Chubbuck, "but dinner is ready; come, one and all."

"Nay, nay," cried Rachel, "we ha' no room for dinner; let me lie down an' rest a bit. "Girls, does ye want a bit more?" None but little Janey went to the table, and she, child-like, thought she had a "small corner for a bite of bread," as she expressed it. Differing from her sisters, not only in face, but in manners and speech as well, her sentences betrayed much of the Scotch found in her mother's; and the manner in which every little speech was made, rendered her a perfect pleasure to Violet and Millie, who were impatient to hear strains from her violin.

"How funny her little brown fingers will look making music," said Violet. The child hardly knew what to make of their united attentions, and as she grew to feel at ease, her nature, like

foaming beer, ran over the sides of the glass, and won continued smiles of approbation. Dear little Janey, how this new love strung its beads of pure delight, as a charming necklace for the forest maiden, and wrote her name in fadeless letters, as the "Flower of Michigan," Violet's loving title.

John Hardy was a true Englishman ; dropped and added his h's with native grace. His heart shone through good natured eyes, and physically he was a wonderful specimen. Standing erect, and measuring six feet six, his muscle, bone and sinew fit for a giant ; his dimensions were a study, and the perfect play of muscles in every finger, compared with ordinary men, drew a contrast as notably striking as that between the glorious horses of Arabia, and the weakest of American specimens.

He was a solid, sturdy farmer, and could walk fearlessly through the forest.

The woodland they were to purchase, was what he thought of, and the work to be done he was longing to do. "No lazy bones in John," said Rachel. "George, let the old man walk along over to school wi' ye ; mother Charity says that ye pass the woodland as ye go."

"All right," said George, "we will do every-

thing we can ; and there are people enough who will help to raise the tabernacle in the wilderness, but, see here ! Squire Loomis has just the place for you ; yes, yes, you will want the Squire's land to till, and the woodland beside. Jedediah comes over to confer with me to-night, and we will talk the matter over with him."

"Aye, George, do ; an' see here ! let the man come right home wi' ye while school is over."

"Exactly. I shall go to his father's direct from school, and eat supper with them, and then we will walk right over."

"The ways o' truth is straight ; now, then, we'se to be all right," and Rachel gave vent to her joy, jumping from the sofa where she had been resting, and running about the room with the nimbleness of a cat.

"See mother cut the antics," said Janey, and all laughed, while George Bean fairly roared ; he screamed at last, "Hold me, hold me, I shall die," as still round and round the room went Rachel, dancing and singing : "The Feyther's led us home, an' we'll stay, an' we'll stay."

When George started for school, he whispered to Mrs. Chubbuck.

"Good land !" was her reply, "wall, let him

come over to-night, I guess it's time to try him, and see if he can be a man."

"Oh ! he can," replied George.

"When be they going over? I didn't understand."

"To-morrow night they propose to go, or rather, along about dusk, in order to return early."

Belinda overheard the whisper, for, as Mrs. Chubbuck had said, George's whisper was no secret, being distinct enough for common hearing, and she walked to the door as he went out, longing to ask him. He felt the question which rose in her heart, and said : "Be of good cheer, the fatted calf is soon to be killed for the feast."

CHAPTER X.

FOOTSTEPS on the veranda—George and Jedediah—and, ah! Belinda knew whose quick springing step she heard. It was a sound of other days, and swiftly through her pulses ran the blood which mantled cheek and brow, as she passed quickly into the kitchen, and seated in the farthest corner, waited for the coming of one she longed to see.

George entered the sitting-room, and introducing Jedediah “to the Hardy’s in particular, and the rest in general,” motioned Simeon to pass through into the kitchen where he surmised his wife might be found.

The heart of Mrs. Chubbuck, which tried so hard to steel itself against Sim., beat as with eager anticipation; and as he crossed the threshold she met him with an outstretched hand and a kindly smile, passing into the other room that he and Belinda might meet alone.

Simeon’s limbs trembled, as he stood for a moment looking for his wife, and when he saw her, and she essayed to rise, as, stretching forth her hands, she said pitifully, “Oh! Simeon,” his

whole being convulsed as with fear. He moved toward her—took a chair beside her, put both arms about her waist; and with her head on his shoulder, their tears mingled. Neither could speak, and for a full half hour the overwhelming thoughts of the past covered them both, while at their feet the tide of a new life made moan, as if to call their attention, and rising higher and higher, it met at last the ice-clods of their united sorrows, and melted them with the warmth of this love, new-born, then when the tide of tears also ran down to unite with this sea of a promised content, their eyes grew dry, and, meeting each other, merged their light as rays of a rising sun, that lights a certain part of the horizon, and Belinda said, “I have wanted you so; and you have missed me, haven’t you?”

“Oh! Belinda, my poor, tired wife; my abused one; God is merciful to me, a sinner, but I will do right henceforth. Has not soberness brought back some of my old life, even though I have suffered intensely? Do you not see your lost Simeon again?”

“I do, indeed; oh! it is too good to be true.”

“You are going home with me to-night? George Bean says you may.”

“Home to-night,” she murmured slowly;

“home to-night! oh! I—yes—I thought—” and her head fell on his shoulder, her hands were cold,—she was faint.

He held her hands, chafing them, and with his strong life, drew back the breath that seemed as if about to leave her.

“Shall I call Mrs. Chubbuck?” he said.

“No, no; I am not strong yet—oh! do not call her, I want to go if I only can; is the house warm?”

“Warm, Belinda; why, have they not told you about it?”

“About what, Simeon? I cannot understand.”

“What a man that George Bean is; I call him my Savior. Squire Loomis, Belinda, sent over wood, meat and vegetables; and then his wife came to see me; and how many women helped her I cannot tell. I only know she asked me for the key of the house, and liberty to go in and arrange things as she pleased; and when I went home at night the little front room looked so pleasant and nice I hardly knew it. A carpet, almost exactly like our old one, with curtains at the windows, trimmed, and kind of caught up, you know, at the side. Oh! I shall make poor work telling it, I guess; but everything was changed. The buttery, filled with good looking dishes and

tins; rugs in the bedroom, kitchen, and even the back entry; our bed was nicely made, with two blankets added, and a splendid wool-filled comforter on the outside of the bed; and in a chair, six new sheets with pillow-cases of home-made linen.

“The door-stone was swept clean, every bit of dirt was gone, and I never had so hard a night alone. To lie there and think of it all, and you not there; away and sick, and perhaps injured for life at my hands. Oh! my blessed wife, what shall I do to atone?” and the tears came again, but they were destined not to stay, for the form of Rachel approached them, and with a peculiar light in her eyes, she said,

“Come mi dears; come on, little Janey is to fiddle a bit—ye’ll joy to hear her;” and although Belinda would fain have kept her seat in the kitchen, holding Simeon’s hand, as if afraid of losing him, there was no waiting or refusing Rachel ’Ardy; and almost before she knew it, they were in the sitting-room, she in her big chair and Simeon beside her.

Little Janey sat on her favorite seat, the stool, and was thrumming the old violin; which looked as if it was a centennarian, being constructed after an old English pattern.

“Now it’s all right mother,” she said, “will ye sing?”

“Aye, mi lass; play through the tune one or two times.”

The round head shook its jet black curls, and with her large, dark eyes fixed dreamily in space, she drew the bow tenderly across the violin, as if in love to woo sweet strains. No music of the wooded wild birds could have been sweeter. A trembling thrill of every string, and from the old box came a mellow ripple of sweet sounds that fell like voices from an extended line of throats, each bearing evidence there was more to come, and ere the melody she wove was half complete, her listeners were spell-bound.

All hearts are truly musical, and no sound coming so near to nature’s own, could speak in vain even to the roughest; the violin was telling a story—what was it?

John Hardy’s hands rested upon his knees, and his chin upon his breast, that rose and fell as if the man within was struggling with emotions. George Bean sat as if paralyzed, and Jedediah’s handsome face spoke wondrous thoughts, as he listened, rapt in pleasure. A strange sensation of awe rested over them; a mingled reverence and love, and Millie and Violet clasped hands.

tightly, while mother Charity kept her ample handkerchief in near contact with her eyes, and as the little player for a moment paused, Rachel cleared her throat, and bending her ear as if to catch the tune, sang the same weird, beautiful strain that Janey played, a smile crossing her face now and then, as with only the graceful efforts of her wee brown hands, she brought the music forth to meet the perfect time her mother kept. The notes were theirs, and none could say whence they were gathered, and Rachel's voice, at first plaintive and low, gathered strength as the singing told a tale of life. Surely, no one but Rachel of Michigan could have done the same.

“In the wilds o' Michigan, on the border o' a lake ;
In a cabin built by logs, rough and strong,
There we lived and loved each other, and our living we did make
Feeding emigrants, as wandered along.

“When the caärt's canvass covered to our cabin came anear,
Little Janey, in her joy, cried aloud
There's a lot o' folks a comin', oh ! dear mother, they is here ;
Has we bread enough an' pork to feed such crowd ?

“An' its well we got along, an' wi' many dollars took
When an hangel of the Lord came, you see,
An' he whispered in mi ear, an' he opened up a book,
An' he read o' new work fur mine an' me.

“An' he said in twelve days more would a settler come at hand,
Who would buy all the cabin an' the bread ;
Who would want to use the hoven in the forest all so grand ;
An' by him, and not by us, should men be fed.

“An’ he bade us move along; follow light o’ eastern star;
Bade us wander to this eastern land awaäy;
And he telled me o’ the work o’ the souls to help afar;
So that’s the reason we is here to-day.

“God has browt us to our own, an’ he means as here we’ll stay,
In the work o’ redemption to join;
We shall help one anither, as we march along our way,
An’ wi’ truth, shaäl be girdled every loin.

“We shall cheat not a neighbor, an’ if we should cheated be,
It is betther we should suffer for the right,
As to heap the fiery coals on our heads, by wrong, you see;
Gie us conscience as is clear day and night.

“Oh! mi brothers an’ mi sisters, let us baäke together bread,
While we rest in the Promises that’s graänd;
As in old, God led his childer, so we all can now be led;
Take the heart o’ Rachel ’Ardy wi’ her haänd.”

The singer ceased, but Janey played right on; her head thrown back; eyes dilating every moment. The violin bow seemed like a thing of life, whose motion nothing could arrest, and the child, lost to every surrounding, saw not the eyes which watched her; knew nothing of the rapturous pleasure her notes awoke, and the thousand and one precious things that hearts were thinking for her; she was playing because she loved to and, like a true musical prodigy, was wandering on the tide of her music clear beyond them all, catching sounds more beautiful than her listeners heard, and seeing sights they dreamed not of. She was

floating in perfumed air, taking long breaths of sweetness, which filled her soul so full, that their windows, her dark eyes, could but enlarge with the light which they reflected and, at last, her mother going near her said, in a low tone:

“Janey, mi love, hold thee, dear; we’ll get so far on road to heaven, it’ll be a hard, cold journey back.”

A sweet smile crossed the face of the minstrel, and with a few last quivering notes, which sounded as if her heaven-born music was running lightly down the stairs which led to earth, the little brown hands lay over the violin and bow and, looking up, with a bright smile, she naively said:

“Have I tired thee, mother Charity?”

“Oh! no,” answered Mrs. Chubbuck, “but your little hands are tired, ain’t they?”

“No, mam; I never get tired wi’ music. I rather do it than go to school, oh! deary dear; poor Janey’s got such a deal to learn, and she likes the birds as makes nests in her fiddle better’n all the long words,” and she hugged the brown box tightly and kissed it in her joy.

“You ought to fiddle all you want to.”

“So she shall make much music,” said her mother, “but she must learn a little; she would

not wish to grow up a foolish lass ; would thee, love ?”

“It’ll be good enough to know it, but the time I has to spend wi’ books, and then the chips ; you know, mother, I has to pick up the chips.”

“You need not pick up a single chip,” said Jedediah. “I will do it for you, if you will pay me in music.”

She looked at him a moment as if to test the sincerity of his words and, leaving her stool, went and sat at his feet, her companion still in her arms, and looking trustfully up into his face.

“I likes ye first rate ; will ye never scold or wer-rit me ? I can’t play good if I’se werrited.”

“Never, you darling,” and the handsome fellow stooped to kiss her forehead as reverently as if she were an angel.

“I’ll get the stool and sit right here,” and in her sweet innocence, she sat by him, as if realizing a protector, and lovingly said :

“Take the bow and hold it a little bit ; ye’ll not harm it.”

“You do not offer your Violin ?”

“No, no,” she quickly said, “I keeps this baby in a green blanket,” and forth from a capacious pocket came the green bag which was well worn, but served its purpose well. The little

maid born, and reared thus far, amid the loneliness of a western settler's home, knew nothing of the vampire want that breeds in luxury, and here was the key to her genuineness, as free as a bird, if she had room. When the first hour's strangeness wore away Janey was herself, and nothing more; an artless, loving child, with a precocity of intellect and a power of music. Rich uncultivated soil lay in the fields of her growing thought, and what would the future bring to her? Violet and Millie prophesied; yes, they all thought of the years that lay before her, and the lessons she read, in her simple way, were as blest to the hearts of her new found friends as their kindly words to her young and appreciative spirit.

"B'lindy is going home," said Mrs. Chubbuck.

"Oh! we shall miss you," chimed Violet and Millie. These two girls were growing together, and, like couplets in a rhyme, harmonious; Millie deferring always to the unerring judgment of Violet, and she, in her turn, consulting ever the taste and wishes of Millie Dean. Apple Rest would have been lonely enough without them.

"Good-by, B'lindy; the girls'll be over to-morrow. I guess one of 'em better go and stay with you a few days for company."

"You cannot spare either of them now," re-

plied Belinda, "I will get along. Good-by," and leaning on Simeon, with George Bean at their side, they went out.

A gleam of pure white moonlight fell across their path, and looked as if it wanted to say, "Trust him, he will be upheld." The moonlight was kind and tenderly appreciative; but the jewel love that a woman strings, as one white bead upon her rosary of years, has always its place; tears may moisten, and clouds may cover, still when born it is always there, and the silken cord of the soul that holds these jewels forever, shields it on either side by oval shapes of differing lustre, where all the work and thought of life runs from the central pearl of her pure affections, in either way to the end of the years that gather. Ah! yes, she would trust; not try, but really, truly, naturally trust, because she loved him, and he held that one dear place. Blessed be Simeon!

"There," said George, as he entered the house, "there goes two happy hearts; so much for fighting rum, and helping a poor fellow to lift his head to look out of darkness into the light. Everybody called him worthless, and you were all mistaken. I knew when I looked in his eye that he was grandly made. To me he looked like a splendid wreck, and I determined to not

leave his shattered mast and floating spars, but to lash together the debris of the man and tow into port where he could be rebuilt, and I did it. Yes sir, by the help of God, who gave me this invincible will, I did it, and I will do it again ; I will never leave the side of a brother and say, take him, Mr. Devil, spirit of the still, take him to the abode of your Satanic majesty. No, no, upon the lake of Avernus shall not willingly float my friends ; I will protect them to the last. I will do anything, everything, and my vigils shall be unceasing, my hand forever near. Oh, great Heaven ! if I only had money enough to live on, I would do nothing else except save sinners from the wine cup."

" Good for ye, George ; gie me your hand. I'se wi' ye, and I never takes a bit o' anything but mi own root beer at spring, and a sup o' new cider if I gets a cauld."

" You do not need even that, my dear sister."

" Yes, I does ; but see here, George, I'se to help ye, an' many's the heel we'll help to turn agin' temptation. Caän't ye get up some sort o' society like, and gie it a good, true naäme, a real true, bonny blue."

" Yes, yes," said George, " we can do every-

thing. Oh, my God ! I thank thee for the coming of Rachel."

"Mrs. Hardy," said Violet, "let me suggest a title for our friend Mr. Bean, which would also be a good name for a society."


"Go ahead, mi lass," and both Rachel and George were pacing the room nervously.

"I named him 'Blue Ribbons' long ago, but never dared to tell him of it."

"Thou hast done well, 'Blue Ribbons' it is; aye, George, thou hast great cause to feel graänd over such a name."

"I believe I shall," said he ; and with blue ribbons bursting from the throats of all simultaneously, little Janey cried aloud : "Mayn't I fiddle a tune for him, mother?"

CHAPTER XI.

 GREYISH afternoon lay over Hyde ; trees and valley wore the sombre threaded mantle which floating clouds had colored, and a chill pervaded the air, prophetic of snow.

Jedediah and Mrs. Loomis drove down to Mrs. Chubbuck's in a double sleigh with a span of horses, and invited mother Charity to go over to Simeon's with them.

"I hardly see how I can leave," she said, "the girls have gone, though they both declared they would stay at home ef I couldn't go ; but I sent Millie over this morning, and Vilit went about a half an hour ago. I guess I'd better stay here ; I hate to hurry."

"Here, here, what's the matter that's raised mother Charity. Go ahead wi' you, woman ; an' if it's to see the sad-eyed gell as left us last night, let me go wi' ye," and Rachel stood before Mrs. Chubbuck with both hands on her shoulder, and no thought of Mrs. Loomis being a stranger, or the informal self-introduction she was perpetrating.

"Mrs. Hardy, this is Squire Loomis' wife."

“Aye, how does ye do, mi dear; I’d like to go over wi’ ye.”

“I should be pleased to have you; we have plenty of room in the sleigh: and Jedediah, who came upon the verandah in time to hear the speech, said: “Where’s our little Janey? let’s have her and the fiddle.”

“Aye, Janey mi lass; get thy sack an’ hood, an’ taäke thy fiddle.”

“Look here,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, “let the Hardy’s all go, and me stay to home here, and kind of get things righted; let me tell the girls; but they refused to go, Nancy, because of a certain feeling of pride, and a fear of being provoked and discomfited by her mother’s irrepressible peculiarities, which expressed themselves freely under any and all circumstances.

“I’m not going,” she said to Ruth, “to see mother cut up, and act so like a crazy woman; and you know the more need of behaving, the less she does. No, indeed; I’m mortified enough here.”

Ruth declined, for reason of the real modesty which made it hard for her to meet strangers, and then she preferred a quiet time, and could get the supper as well as Mrs. Chubbuck. She was a practical worker, and learned readily regarding

house work. "Now, go right on," she said to Mrs. Chubbuck, "I will get the supper for us three and the school teacher; can do it just as well as not; you must go," and she did.

Putting mother Charity, Rachel and his mother on the ample back seat, and tucking the buffalo robes snugly about them, Jedediah ensconced Janey and her violin beside himself, and the ride was shortly accomplished.

The little cottage was being stormed with people, and Belinda, looking about in wonder and almost dismay, thinking, if many more appeared, they would have to sit on the floor, or perhaps hang on to the window-sills, for the rooms were small, and the numbers threatened to be legion.

"I am glad you have come," she said, as Rachel ran, without ceremony, into the house, followed by Janey.

"Aye, I'se glad I has; but did mi own invitin', else I shouldn't ha' been here; what's the fuss they'se raisin'? wayn't ye get too tired?"

"I guess not; the girls do not let me do a thing, except to sit in my new cushioned chair; I will offer it to you."

"Nay, nay; you'll not find Rachel o' Michigan such a fool as to take what ye need, mi dear; seat thyself, an' don't werrit. These is good folks;

they'se come to make ye glad, aye, sure enough; there comes George wi' three or four men."

"Sure enough, Simeon and Squire Loomis, with Mr. Hardy, and some one else I do not know."

"Here we are," said George, "ready to enroll our names on the list of the chosen. Soldiers in the army of the Lord; and here is our dear sister Rachel; well, well, the victory is ours."

"Aye, that it is; an' look ye here, George, this is a nice comfortable little house, just the kind o' a home we needs, can't ye draw the lines out on paper for us, to look over an' figger up the cost, &c."

George smiled, for although he himself was forever piling thoughts, and prone to mix them up strangely, venturing on the sea of projects, often, when the wind was anything but fair, and his friends looking in another direction, he did not fail to realize the untimely suggestions of others, and remarked quietly,

"We will attend to that matter at an early day."

"Aye," she persisted, "but get it into your head now. We'se in haste for fixin'; we must not bide wi' mother Charity longer nor we can help."

"Very well," he answered.

“Come,” said Mrs. Loomis, “now our friends are all here, we must eat the supper that is waiting for us.”

“Simeon, whispered Belinda, “what do you think?”

“I think the millenium is here,” and he dashed aside tears as he spoke.

Simeon and his wife sat at the head of the table, and the guests numbered twenty-five; all were accommodated comfortably, and before anything was served, Squire Loomis called on Eli Perkins to ask a blessing. He was an honest-hearted and progressive man, of few words and active principles, and in earnest, simple way, he invoked the presence of love and an abiding peace, which should make the way of life a straight white path, and “may our friends Simeon and Belinda,” he said, “never have less than now.”

The meal was partly through when Enos Hard proposed that they should pay a little compliment to those at the head of the table.

“A toast to Mr. and Mrs. Eastman.”

George responded in his usual telling manner.

“Let us pledge the health of the Lieutenant and his wife in a glass of undulated aqua. It is the drink of the gods, and an ‘*Argumentum ad hominem*,’ and he held aloft a glass.”

All guests, save Rachel and Janey, touched their glasses, welcoming the toast with a courteous dignity, that gave evidence of good breeding.

Rachel laughed aloud, not at the token, but the phrase, whose latin she did not understand, and then, as if recollecting herself, half apologized.

“I’ll not forget ye good folks, if I did lose mi senses in George’s grand speech ; never ye mind,” and a merry laugh went round the board.

The meal ended ; all sat waiting as if for something more, and a whisper at George’s elbow, caused him to inquire in his honest fashion.

“What next shall be done ?”

Eli Perkins leaning forward, spoke to him in an undertone, and those near, saw a parcel go from one to the other.

George, clearing his throat, rose.

“My well beloved friends ; brothers and sisters, whose hearts are united as one, the existence of whose sympathies are coeval with my own ; in the name of your kind appreciation of a just need ; in response to a call from a human heart, I am by you this moment authorized to deliver into the hands of our worthy Lieutenant and his devoted wife, a mysterious package, the contents of which I am not apprized of, but realizing it is a gift from the hearts of an affectionate people, thank you for

it, in behalf of the donee, into whose hands I now deliver it, and who will, undoubtedly, in his graceful response, completely overshadow my poor attempt at recognizing your services ; therefore the least, as well as very best that you can do, oh ! Simeon, is to receive this package, and make a speech," and he handed the parcel across the table to the confused, but not unappreciative, Simeon. Speech making was not like working in the saw mill, and he thought just then, the largest log that ever grew, would have been an infant to handle, in comparison with an expression of thanks, and with a lump in his throat, as large as a walnut, which he struggled to swallow, he rose, and manfully mastered the difficulties around him, the first sentence cutting the ice and relieving him greatly.

"Speech making is not my forte. I work in the Saw Mill ; but from the depths of my best feeling, I thank you, not only for the gift I hold in my hand, but for everything you have done for me. It is true I am receiving more than I deserve, if I am to be judged by the past, but I have regained the confidence in myself, which was lost. The fangs of the serpent which lurked in the wine cup, are no longer buried in my flesh, and the poison which had penetrated my very soul, almost,

has been drawn out by needed suffering, and the physician who had moral strength to probe the sore, who stayed with me through long nights of fearing agony—he, by whose active help your sympathy was stirred, is to me a Savior; George Bean has done what no other could or would have attempted, and I thank the God who helps men; the man who lifted me from the pit of hell; and you, my blessed friends. May I never be worthy of less, and may I never forget the kindness you have so freely bestowed.”

“Open the box,” cried Rachel, “there might not be such a deal in it for all.”

Tears and smiles were at this moment blent, as taking off the lid, Simeon saw thirty shining eagles of gold; his hand trembled, he dropped the box, and with his eyes tear-filled, he said:

“Great Heaven! friends; what shall I say? how dare I try to thank you?”

“Hurrah for Deacon Rayne!” cried George, “you are free from his clutches, thank the Lord!” and then, with the look of a settled conviction on his face, he said slowly, and with great earnestness: “This grand surprise, which has taken the starch out of Simeon, has well nigh unmanned me. It is more than I expected, and I feel in duty bound to respond to your beneficence; for

inasmuch as you have relieved my brother, me also have you benefitted. My prayer and work, homely as it was, has been noted ; and oh ! my brothers and sisters, let us here to-night, upon the evening of the fifth day of the week, the day which derives its name from the God of thunder, a significant fact ; let us here, at the perihelion of our heartfelt ministrations, just at the moment when our souls come near the central Sun of love and purity, the paternal truth of the universe ; let us, I say, bind our hearts together with a divine desire that we may perform more of these blessed ministrations.

“ When we look into the bright and intelligent face of our brother Simeon, and behold the wealth of love and the integrity of purpose which rises from his soul to meet these friendly overtures ; when in listening to his maiden speech, we perceive with great joy that there is a fountain of thought within, a reservoir of intelligent comprehension, not only of facts, but the principles which underlie them, we lift our hands and say, behold the change, realizing that we have found a treasure. And how has this pearl of the mind, and purpose of Simeon been discovered ? I answer, by the simple act of justice, which cannot but make the hearts of his friends lighter, as well

as his own. There is no part of our earthly lives so pleasurable as that which embraces deeds of kindness ; heaven-born bestowals upon another : and few are there among the world's people who can really enjoy eating their bread, and sitting by their fire alone ; the commerce of souls is the first desideratum of existence ; not the traffic in morals, which is little less than a debt and credit account with our Maker ; but the free and full export and import of thought, which not only allows but commands us to make another's case our own ; to exchange soul civilities, which are most acceptable in the sight of God and man.

“ Let us make this memorable night replete with pleasure, by forming this little band, a nucleus around which may gather the garnered truths of years. Let us frame a code consisting of the single law, ‘ Love ye one another,’ and dedicate the efforts of our fraternal work to the cause of temperance and human needs.

“ We well know that men are intemperate in more ways than one ; the alluring wine-cup casts upon its victim a spell whose potency is equalled in other ways, but since it has fallen to our especial lot to work in this direction, let us accept the position offered, and gracefully bow to the supremacy of the power which rules conditions,

to govern men. We are officers elect, and let us prove not Peters, but devoted workers, worshippers at the shrine of human interest and sympathy.

“Our flower friend, Violet, suggested a title for such a society of helpers, which to me is eminently appropriate, since the blue of the sky is the sacred canvass of Deity, which in its unfading beauty is a promise to our hearts, and the stars, that are to me as eyes that beam with truest feeling, could not rest as appropriately upon a sky of vermillion as upon this turquoise ground. The name of Blue Ribbons is a euphonious title, and a graceful tribute to the workers who will hold over their fellows the silken reins of love and purity. Shall we accept it?”

“Aye,” shouted Rachel, who was as much at home as if she had lived in Hyde all her days.

“Aye,” responded a chorus of voices, and Simeon proposed that George Bean be elected President and Secretary also.”

“That will be a little too much responsibility for one,” said George, “I would prefer to have no office, and perfect liberty to express my thought.”

The decision was, that the nomination of Presi-

dent was wise and just, and he was elected by acclamation.

“Hurrah for Blue Ribbons !” shouted Rachel, “that’s what Vilit calls him, and it’s a first rate name, Blue Ribbons is, George. No backin’ out to his flutterin’; neither wind nor rain puts his colors to shame.”

“Let Simeon be the scribe, and keep all our accounts; the Secretary and Treasurer of the Independent Lodge of Blue Ribbons,” cried George.

And the motion was carried, while the good feeling and earnest thought of the few who were gathered together, was fuel that builded a fire in the town of Hyde, whose flames reached even the mountain tops on either side, and not an individual within a radius of six miles, who did not hear of Simeon Eastman’s deliverance from alcohol, and the new order whose weekly meetings were to be held in the school house; the I. L. O. B. R.

After the election of officers, and the lull in affairs which followed the clearing up of the table, Mrs. Chubbuck proposed music from Janey’s violin. The little girl hardly felt equal, for never before in all her life had she seen a merry making like this; but, reassured by Jedediah, who selected a seat in one corner for her,

upon a low stool—which she seemed to prefer to anything else—she took courage. Her music was acceptable, and her performance on one string instead of four, a noticeable one.

It took her a little longer to lose herself with all these eyes upon her, and the notes were at first like the chirping of young birds in a nest, the flutter of wings over them, the cooing and coaxing of a mother robin, who tempted her darlings to try their wings, and after a time, when Janey's dark eyes grew lustrous, and her fingers moved as if by magic, the brood of birds took courage, and with plumed wings, mother and younglings, sailed boldly forth and sang. United throats trilled harmoniously ; warbled sweetness filled the dwelling, and every sound, save those which Janey drew forth, was hushed into a telling silence. The people breathed as if half afraid ; and when at last the birds came back, their music ran into muffled notes, as one by one they crept within the time-worn box, and with the last note of peace to their rest that fell on listening ears, Janey dropped her bow, also her eyes, and sat quite still, as if afraid.

The mothers and fathers of Hyde said, “ Oh ! how beautiful,” and wonder sat on their faces, which rose from their very hearts. Janey's music touched their souls.

CHAPTER XII.

WE must have it all straight," said George to Simeon ; "I want to survey and make a map of this property for you, before you pay the Deacon a cent. Make the survey, at any rate ; the map making can be deferred if you desire."

"I would like to give him the money, and get rid of the thought of indebtedness. I can hardly wait," said Simeon.

"I ought, really, to have a reliable transit to do the work with ; this old one I have is, I fear, inaccurate."

"What do they cost, Mr. Bean ?"

"Cost ? oh ! they cost more than I shall save in ten years at the rate I go on. I can now get a good one in the city for fifty dollars, a surveyor of western railroads having died and left it to be sold as part of his estate."

"Well, we will wait a little, if you say so," said Simeon, "I have half a mind to get the transit you speak of. Do you think I could ever learn to use it ?"

“Of course you can ; it will be just the thing for you to do.”

“Let me ask my wife,” and Simeon went to interview Belinda ; returning placed fifty dollars in George’s hand.

“You get the transit ; I can easily make up this amount for the Deacon by the time we are ready.”

George’s delight knew no bounds, and with his new friend Jedediah, the trip to the city and purchase were made ; and no king could have looked at a coveted crown with more delight than George at the transit. “It will be just as well for me as if it were all my own,” he said.

Jedediah was a pleasant companion for George. His quick and ready perception, his honest appreciation of his sterling qualities rendered him a near and dear friend ; and now that an arrangement had been effected whereby George was to instruct him in mathematics, there was a pleasant prospect before them both.

“I shall be your first lieutenant,” said the young man, as together they talked of the survey to be made of Simeon’s land, and also the acres which Rachel and her husband were to purchase.

“Yes, sir, I shall be the captain, and you the best kind of a helper ; a first lieutenant, but that

is not your title, you know. Simeon is entitled to the name by virtue of inheritance, as well as soldierly bearing. Let me see what is appropriate to you.

Jed. appears to fit you well. I think that is the proper cognomen ; albeit, it is a common title. Nevertheless it has a sort of true ring about it, and Jed it shall be."

"Just as you say, Professor ; but here comes one of nature's noble specimens," and they went over a thank-you-ma'am, which caused George to hold fast to the transit, and holding up the horse for a momentary stop on level ground, both saluted Deacon Rayne, who was approaching on foot from an opposite direction.

George lifted his hat clear from his head and swung it aloft.

"Ah ! Deacon, here we are ; science has triumphed, and now I shall be well fitted to measure all the estates in Hyde. You will, of course, want a survey of your territory, and a correct map, well lettered, for future reference."

"H'm," growled the Deacon, "what do you call that thing ?"

"A surveyor's transit, a most valuable acquisition to me. It is an instrument which consists of a telescope which revolves in a vertical plane on a

horizontal axis combined with a compass ; an invaluable help in running lines, observing bearings, horizontal angles, &c., &c., also an aid in the prosecution of a celestial search. I hope you will give me a job right away."

"H'm, I guess I can measure all I've got to measure with a ten-foot pole. I hain't no use for things that stretch the truth, and make a muskeeter look like an elephant. I've got along without any of 'em, and it's a poor time to begin now. I think you'd do better teachin' school, than you will travellin' around with one o' them exaggeratin' things."

"Your caustic contravention of my design to perpetrate a warranted kindness for you, is beyond the conception of an ordinary mind. Deacon Rayne, your superabundant zeal in behalf of an educative scheme, whereby the juveniles of Hyde may profit during the period of their abdolesence, should not abate in behalf of those, who like yourself, stand upon the meridian of years. I am surprised."

"Well, well," and the Deacon shuffled uneasily from one side to the other ; "I haint no use for all these new contrivances, goin' 'round tellin' folks' fortins, or tryin' to by pawin' their heads over, and squintin' up one eye to look through a

long glass up to the clouds or onto a rail fence. Good afternoon," and he passed on, leaving Jedediah convulsed with laughter, and George longing to scream aloud, which he did when they were fairly beyond hearing. "Poor old fool," he said, "he knows so little that it really hurts him to think about it."

"A new thought frightens him," said Jed.

"Yes, still his offense after all is made menial by his ignorance ; see to it, young man, that you be not less pardonable than he, there is on your part no natural excuse for evading the truth. Deacon Rayne never will forget the visit of our phrenological friend, Prof. Rathbun ; he does forget, however, that the Bible enjoins the truth upon us, and that if our heads be cut off by it, we must let them go. But here we are at the saw-mill."

Simeon had seen them, and was waiting smilingly for their near approach.

"Here is the protege that I was authorized to deliver into your hands, although, since activity is conducive to life, it will be highly necessary that I shall make practical demonstration of it's worth whenever a job of surveying comes to hand."

"A pretty good speech," said Simeon, "but do not be in such a hurry to deliver your baggage.

The transit is yours, and you have paid me for it a thousand times over."

"Ye Gods," said George, looking bewildered.

"I mean it," continued Simeon, "drive right along," and he turned to go into the saw-mill.

"But see here, old fellow, you are a little too fast ; I feel strangely at this turn in affairs."

"You cannot beat me there. You have caused me more strange feelings than I can ever bring to you. The transit is yours, and I command you to go home."

They started along, and George sat as silent as a stone. Jed saw a tear in his eye and said not a word until they reached Mrs. Chubbuck's. Then, clambering out of the wagon with the box in his hand which held the instrument, he called :

"Bring in the tripod, Jed., and we will set him up," and entered the house singing : "The day of jubilee has come."

"Aye," said Rachel, who hurried forward at the sound of his voice, "aye, George, so it has ; but what has ye got there ; a dog's coffin ?"

"Oh, Rachel of the wilderness ! the blessing of the Lord has fallen upon me ; I am covered with kindness. I am rich ! rich ! rich !"

"What is ye goin' to do wi' the three-legged thing ye's got ?"

“Wait a moment, my dear sister ; wait, and we shall see what we shall see,” and throwing his hat upon the floor, he proceeded to arrange it.

Mrs. Chubbuck and Violet were busy with spreading hens’ feathers for drying, on a table in the little back room.

“There ! something new’s up,” said the good woman, “we’d better lay a paper over these feathers, and put flats on two corners to hold it down. George’ll have every door in the house opened in just three minits ; I wonder what he has got. Did you ever see such a rumpus as them two—George and Rachel—will cut up. They act enough alike to be twins, and I’ll bet a dollar they’d quarrel ef they lived together, both of ’em so odd ; but then their hearts is white as snow ; that makes up for all the breezes. I don’t believe I could stand it six months steady through ; I feel half crazy now, sometimes,” and the last sentence had hardly escaped her lips, when slam went the kitchen door, opening and shutting in a twinkling, and out shot George, calling, “mother of Charity, where art thou ?”

“Here I be,” was the reply, “what on earth’s the matter ?”

“Come and see, come, flower-pot, come.”

“You act as if you was tickled all but to death,” and Mrs. Chubbuck smiled.

“Come on, come on,” interposed Rachel, “come and see the auld three-legged man wi’ a round glass top for a head like the face o’ a watch, wi’ one pinter, an’ the tall brass ’at wi’ glass at one end an’ a hole at t’other, that he wears above his head instead o’ on it, an’ crost-ways at that. Come, I say, and gie yourself a peek through the long queer winder o’ auld three-leggedy’s hat. If he walks he’ll hae to gie a dot and two steps instead o’ the one. Oh, dear! dear! Blue Ribbons has done the graät thing,” and she laughed long and loud.

“Here it is,” said George, triumphantly, “a transit-compass, see what a beauty! let me turn the telescope outward, where you can have a good chance to look through it clear over to the lasting hills,” and mother Charity peered into the distance.

“Why, it’s a good deal like that old telescope you’ve had; where did you get it?”

“It is built upon an improved plan and is much more serviceable than the old instrument, although that would be better than nothing, to be sure. This is a perfect God-send to me, and I am in an ecstasy of feeling over it. It is the gift of Simeon.”

Astonishment was depicted on all their faces, and Mrs. Chubbuck’s sensible conclusion that he

had done just right was the well indorsed opinion not only of the inmates of "Apple Rest," but those to whose ears the news drifted. Simeon would have preferred it kept a secret; but George decided, and "honor to whom honor is due," was his unchanging motto.

The Lieutenant grew daily bolder and more promising, and the days of work and comfort sped by his door well heeded and appreciated.

It took only a week or two to make the needed survey, and as George half suspected, another of the Deacon's small meanesses was disclosed.

Simeon thought he knew the boundaries of the farm, and he did know what he bargained for; but when the deed came to light, and the matter of boundary lines especially sought after, it was discovered that either Simeon's memory was at fault, or the Deacon (who had caused the paper to be drawn) had forgotten the extent of territory.

"Quite a difference," said George, "it makes a change of about two and a half acres, this taking a slice from three sides."

Simeon was wroth with anger at first, and muttered a curse against the Deacon.

"Hold on," said George, "spit it all out to yourself, and then keep cool and see a little fun. You will not be cheated. I can fix it."

“I see little fun in it; the mean, small-souled, contemptible, cowardly old fool! he needs a thrashing.”

“Hold on, I say,” cried George; “remember that the true wisdom is to keep a steady course, and we shall get to the windward, and drive the Deacon to the shore as easy as rolling off a log.”

It was a grim smile that flitted past Simeon as he stood there in his wrath, which only made his handsome face and dark eyes strikingly perfect in their expressive beauty.

“I leave the whole thing to you, Mr. Bean. I believe if I ever get into Heaven it will be because of your help. I am not enough of a Christian to bear such meanness as this. I feel like shaking the very life out of Melancthon. His position as a Deacon ought to be criticised. I wish I could feel honest in joining the church, and push him out of it. He has no right there.”

“Look out there, Simeon, you will run against the stump of erroneous judgment; remember that you have suffered almost death at the hands of non-appreciation and harsh judgment.”

“I will, Mr. Bean, and also take myself out of your way,” and he strode toward the house with emphasis in the touch of his heel, which clicked sharply at each step.

“He is a noble fellow,” murmured George. “His Hiawathian strides are symbolic of the man within—fit for a President”—and singing aloud, “Roll swifter round, ye wheels of time,” he pursued his journey homeward, and the thread of his thought, settling at last the problem with the maturation of a plan to get the truth, the whole truth, out of the Deacon’s own mouth.

“Out of his own mouth shall he be condemned,” and Rachel sprang to the door as usual.

“What’s gone awry wi’ ye? George knaws there’s summat bakkads.”

“The world in general,” he replied; “but when am I to survey your territory?”

“Aye, that’s a graät thowt to rise on us. I’sē waäted three long daäys fur ye to speak it; but wi’ the school an’ all, I hardly see how ye can do all that’s waäntin’ o’ ye.”

“I will begin it to-morrow. Take my dinner to school in a basket, and work at noon with the help of Jed., who holds the target, makes stakes and drives them, &c.”

“Aye, that’ll be good; and what’s the cost o’ all this?”

“I cannot give an entirely correct estimate until I ascertain the amount of time consumed, and the worth of labor. Plenty of time for that.”

“George, seat thyself while I tells ye just what I thinks about ye;” and with her limbs crossed, and hands clasped over them, the look of deep feeling, mingled with that of a settled conviction covered her face—her blue and expressive eyes looked into his, and she began,

“George, I call you the fagendedest feller I’ve ever seen—the best heart, the whitest sperrit; ye has your wings for ever an’ aye a beatin’ agin the door o’ the cage, to let out some good an’ generous feeling as gathers there; but in all business matters ye has a shackly kind o’ way, an’ many’s the dollar ye’ll earn to send awa’ fra’ yourself an’ off fur the good o’ others.

“Look ye, George, it is only the shifflin’ waäy ye has a doin’ things, as will keep ye a poor man; an’ more nor this, the great knowledge ye has ought fur to taäke ye where I know well it waynt—while time ye mout be i’college bred lads, a helpin’ the breedin’; why ye knows ten to the one o’ that perfessin feller as feels the heads o’ the folks, an’ ye’ll never rattle in your pocket half way, nor quarter the dollars he’ll get.”

“I will not say you are wrong, my dear sister, but I shall have the supreme satisfaction of knowing that I have not abused the innate love for my fellow man. I shall live and die with unstained

hands. No crying children shall send their voices after me, haunting me for the bread I took from their mouths in an ungodly warfare; the traffic in hearts I will have no share in."

"Aye, that's all true enough; but, see here, ye forget that its robbery all the same to your own needy self, if ye throws out the dollars ye ought to keep. God helps the man as helps himself; an', ye must remember that we'se all but growed up childer; an', now, if my gells never walked by themselves, how do ye think they'd get on? Crutches is good, but whole legs is better, an' you'se as apt to tug an' scramble along, pullin' many a one after ye, as able to walk as you is, an' that's poor kind o' charity; its but a waste o' God himself, fur ye has right to keep wood enough to start your fire. I say, George, ye has need o' bein' temperate in doin' good. God lets out the warm sun, an' he throws down the rain, but he never plowt up a field, or sowed a bit o' a turnip or taäters. What did he gie us our arms an' legs, our thowts an' feelins, if it isn't expected as we'll be each o' us a man an' a woman? Look out, I tell ye; one o' these days ye'll waänt a hoame, an' ye owt to have it. Help them as is willin' to do theirselves a bit o' a good, an' leave the gowks an' the tree-toads to rot in the woods.

I say, George, I tells ye true—I knaäws I does.”

“Well,” replied George, “I think there may be some truth in your remarks; at any rate it is a good sermon. I only wish you had been environed with advantages that would have rendered your intellectual development what it might and ought to have been. Your mixture of English, Scotch and American words is to me a mystery.”

“Doan’t be a makin’ fun o’ me, George; I tells ye just how it is, mi feyther was a Yorkshire man, the mother a Scottish lassie, an’ that mixt me up a good deal; but when I was wi’ the Lanky’s, in auld Hingland, I did well; then, when we found America, I tried to make summat out o’ my gab, and here I’s not one nor tother, but a bit o’ all.”

“Your husband talks somewhat differently.”

“Aye, John is a double an’ twisted Yorkshireman, and he haulds to it well. The gells, Ruth and Nancy, talks to us both, an’ tries to fix over the words. Nancy bothers the most; she’s bound to be fine; but I reckon its little the change she’ll work; but the little cot in the woods is what most fills me now. I waänt a big chimney to it, for houses needs throats as well as folks; there’s a deal o’ misery throwed out wi’ the flame o’ a fire, and all as goes out is that much saved to blood

an' stomach ; an' I tells ye, George, there's too much that we doesn't know about these beautiful bodies we'se got—they owt to be fit fur the best o' souls to stay in while a hundred years—and here comes John 'Ardy wi' letters an' the papers."

"There beant naw paper—just hoanly une spat-tit letter, owd 'ooman ; ye mout think the maäle mon setted hon hit," spoke John, in his low, heavy undertone, which savored often of a deep growl.

"Ye think ye's been for nawt ; but gie me the letter, John—it mout be news betther nor you think," and she broke the seal—going near the window to read it.

The girls and John, waiting to hear its contents, were doomed with a surprise, for she had only read the first three lines, when she threw it down, and commenced walking up and down the floor, wringing her hands, and crying aloud :

"Oh ! dear ! dear ! dear ! woe an' misery, an' I wish all the courts o' chancery was dead, and we was dead, an' had never been a born, oh ! dear ! dear !"

Ruth picked up the letter and thrust it into her pocket, trying in vain to soothe her mother, who only made greater moan and, at last, she said to her, in a positive way :

"Mother, seat yourself ; can you forget that

you are in other folks' house? you craze everybody—you show less sense than a child; here, we have no time to find out what all this rumpus is about. Give us time to read the letter, will ye?"

"We bean't able fur to help thee moarn agean we finds owt," said John.

Rachel stopped as suddenly as if an arrow had hit her and, falling on to the floor sat, doubled up, with her head in her hands. "Read it," she said.

Ruth read slowly and carefully then, handing it to her father said, naively:

"What a woman is this mother of ours! the letter says only good news. All there is to it we have to lay claim to 600 pounds of good money. What ails thee, mother?" and she looked at the woman who, like a human ball, sat still on the floor, and all, including George, burst into a hearty laugh, which brought her to her feet.

"Oh! dear! dear!" she cried; "I say its no need we has now o' these dollars, an' I waänt not the trouble; but stop! George'll do the writin' fur us; will ye, George?"

"Certainly," he replied; "I'll do the business and take the money if you feel so badly."

"It's the fuss, the botherin' I thowt about; an' if it can be done wi no worritin', I'll moan no more. Janey, love, come an' fiddle; I say we'll

bake a good dinner in the big hoven, when its done, an' gie a bit o' good cheer. Janey get the fiddle;" and the smile which sat upon her face was as bright as if she had never made a moan; while Nancy, provoked at her, looked sullenly down, and Ruth, with a naive expression, which revealed her perfect acquaintance with all her mother's moods, resumed her knitting, and John sat covered with the heavy silence, which became him well.

"Very little *he* has to say," said Mrs. Chubbuck; "but when he does speak, it's like a voice of thunder rolling out of a cave."

This remarkable woman was a stranger to herself, and, outside of her legitimate sphere, as helpless as an infant. The presence of an ordinary care distracted her. "The idea," said Millie, "of crying because she had to claim a little property,—write two or three letters. She is ridiculous."

"Millie Dean, judge not," was the verdict of sweet Violet.

CHAPTER XIII.

IT'S oh! dear, dear, if mother gets sorry; an' oh! dear, dear, if she's tickled the same; don't ye think she's a funny one?" said Janey, as she wiped the dishes while Violet washed them.

"I think she is a dear, good mother; and I love her very much."

"I'se glad said Janey," looking wonders, "for Nancy says none'll like her, wi' her cuttin' up, an' she scolds an' scolds, and makes me cry; she telled me yesterday she'd not go to school a bit until we had new frocks; an' our frocks is good, don't ye think so?"

"Certainly they are; you look as neat as a pin, when you have the little white ruff on your neck, and a clean apron on. Little girls only need to be dressed plain and neat, especially when they have such nice black curls as yours."

"Do ye like the curls Violet? Jed telled me he likes 'em more nor a little; ain't he a beautiful lad? an' don't ye love him well? I does. You has curls too; yellow ones."

The bright blood ran over the face of the sweet

girl, leaving a spot of carmine on either cheek, as if to say, she does, she does.

“I think he is very nice; he is a right good friend of yours, isn't he?”

“Aye, that he be, an' I telled him as how I loved you the best, an' you loved me. I telled him that, an' all about the tuckin' me up in the bed, and the kiss ye gives me too; an' he looked his eyes wide open, an' he said:

“‘She is a beautiful Violet, you think.’

“An' I telled him aye, ye was, an' then for fraid of his thinkin' ye might gie me too much love, nor think him good, I said ‘she loves ye well as Janey,’ an' he says up as quick an' good, ‘I hope she does;’ an' then he went a thinkin' an' I thinkin', an' I guess he was fraid if you don't like him. Ain't ye glad I said the words?”

“Oh! Janey, my child, I never told you so.”

“Naw, I knows it; but ye see I thawt it out myself, an' I knows it feels good for folks to be loved; that's all. Ye can't love feyther, can ye? he's that big an' homely, but he's good, an' I likes to ride in his arms all over. He's a strong feyther; but ye couldn't love him like the bright-eyed lad, could ye? I hae seen ye look so sweet at Jed.”

“Why not? he is a very good man; yes, I like him well,”

Aye, ye likes him well ; but not so strong as ye could like the lad, and the artless child, with her sacred intuition, had divined the secret which not even Millie knew. "Dear little heart," said Violet, as she kissed the broad forehead which lay half covered under the wandering curls. Her words had set Violet dreaming with her eyes far away, looking at pictures full of promise, whose warm bright colorings woke at the touch of a tender hand ; yes, to herself and the sky she owned it, Jed's handsome face lay mirrored in her heart, his voice was a presence that her love invoked, and his bold, fearless ways, combined with the open sympathy of his manly nature, rendered him her ideal of all that was manly and true, and she gave him freely her best and purest affections ; loved him without stint, but her heart alone was her confessional, and no word had passed between them. Strange that Janey should think of it all, and yet, Violet thought to herself, the child does not know what she knows ; her soul reads mine, and she hears the music but realizes not earthly rendering, and hand in hand with thought, two souls went out to sea ; Janey in the bark of her own artless nature, the birch canoe of young and fearless thought, and Violet in the boat of love's mystery, built of whitest wood, and set with sails

of drifted snow, Jed with the tiller in his hand, and she by his side.

“There is enough to do, and always is,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, “whether we cook for two or ten, and I do hate to ask you to get the supper to-night; but I have an object in going over to the Circle. They meet at Rayne’s, and his wife, poor soul, is always so glad to see me. I ought to go, and I’m bound Ruth shall go somewhere; she’ll have work enough when the house is ready, good girl. Nancy says she’ll go if her mother stays at home, and I guess she will, for she’s got a headache and gone to bed. Millie says she shan’t go, and leave you.”

“I had much rather she would,” replied Violet, “Janey and I will have a nice time. Yes, Millie Dean must go;” and she did, for Violet’s pleas were irresistible, no matter how her own mind ran.

“I’s not sorry they’s gone,” said Janey, “for Jed is comin’ over, an’ we’ll hae a good time. He telled me he’d come, an’ the grammar man, so mother says, is goin’ to be over at Simin’s all the evenin’ workin’ on the figgers for him.”

Violet’s heart gave a jump, leaped into her throat it seemed to her, and she was trying hard to swallow it, thereby forcing it back to its place

in her breast, when a quick step was heard on the verandah ; a moment more, and the subject of Janey's thought entered.

“ All alone ? ” he said inquiringly.

“ Aye, ” replied Janey, shaking her curls and laughing merrily ; “ an' we'se glad, too, fur its a betther time we'll hae to ourselves ; here is the chair for you close by the fire, an' Violit's beside of it, an' Janey's stool just where she likes it best. May I play the fiddle ? ”

“ Oh, indeed you may ; we all of us love the fiddle, as well as the player. ”

“ An' ye likes Violit an' Janey best o' all, I telled her so, an all about what I said, as Janey an' Violit loved ye well, ” and with a bright glance, the unconscious beauty ran for the box, which she kept in its green blanket and hidden from sight.

Two hands met each other in a silent pressure, and Jed had only time to say, “ Is it true, my darling ? can you say it ? you are precious to me, the flower that I love best, ” and Janey entered with her treasure.

Tears filled Violet's eyes, and stood like pure water in a crystal fountain, reflecting myriad shapes unseen, and down in her heart lay silent and still, love's treasure trove ; a gem of purity in

the unsullied setting of her endearment. For the first time in his life, Jed felt the pressure of the tide, which threw at his feet, as it were, pearls from the depths of an ocean, delineated by a human soul. The flush on her cheeks, and above all the flame in her soulful eyes, that rose steadily with her thought, enabled him to read volumes, which were more beautifully rendered than if born of words, while his hand still held tightly her own, and his heart throbbed manfully in his breast. If he could only tell her of himself, of the image that had lain an ever present picture before him since their first meeting ; how he had longed, yet dared not by word or sign reveal his thought until now, emboldened by Janey's truthful reading, he asked her love, and received the silent and comprehensive answer.

Janey played as if she knew the song he sang to his heart and Violet's ; the violin told it all, its birds sang from the sweet beginning, clear to the glorious finale, and they drank in the music as nectar, held to their lips, which fed their souls to a delicious repleteness. The playing, weird and sweet and tremulous, was the touch of an artist, the last, long, lingering touch to a well-beloved picture, one which was roseate with reality, and breathing a life belonging to a conscious entity.

Ah ! this was glorious dreaming, lost yet never more naturally found than now, the past merged in the now, ran on to the birth of the future, which compared with the present, was the perfectly unfolded rose, born of the bud of to-day.

Wrapt in each other and what before them lay, the hours sped on, and still young Janey played, until really wondering at the long continued silence, she stilled her bow, and said :

“We’s too still an’ happy, isn’t we? Ye better talk a little, Janey has played the tongues away; they lose theirselves in the fiddle.” Footsteps sounded near, and a breath from the world came in, so hearts shut quietly and closely each sacred door, and when Jed said “good night,” he whispered to Violet: “We will take a ride to-morrow.”

She bowed, and threw over him the mantle of her smile, then crept to her room and laid her fair young head upon a dream-filled pillow beside Millie’s, but told no word of her new-born trust.

Many hands make light work, and there was no lack of help to raise the frame and shapen, in accordance with Rachel’s desire, their home.

It was built upon the edge of the wood, just near the brook, whose ending we found long ago in a basin of stone at Mrs. Chubbuck’s back door,

and the delight of the Hardy's knew no bounds when this apparently simple fact became patent to them.

"Oh!" cried Janey, "its a reglar river, it is, an' wi' the spring at one side, an' this at tother, waynt we be grand uns."

"I can't see anything so dretful 'cute in that brook," said Mrs. Chubbuck; "but then everybody's blessin's are what they feel, and it's as true as preachin', that I should build a little farther away; they reckon on ducks and geese, but the skunk part of it they forget. I guess they'll have hard work to get rich on ducks and geese; but everybody to their notion."

The house itself was constructed solidly, and peculiarly also; no one would expect Rachel to take pattern from any one else, "and if they did they'd be disappointed." Mother Charity's verdict; and although John Hardy was a man of power, he paid great deference to his wife's opinion; yes, more the respect which she must and would have, and when sometimes she broached a new and consequently strange idea; for prone we are to shrink from that to which we are unaccustomed, and he objected or spoke disparagingly, it had no weight with Rachel. She knew well that what could be done, would be, and moved

right on, sometimes not even replying to his remarks; and when the building of the house was on hand her ideas, and not his, were those which governed; at which the builders marvelled greatly, which she well knew, and it pleased her to see them open their eyes in wonder at the orders she gave.

“We’s to have it builded up right an’ strong, an’ it’s no plaster at all I waänts, an’ none we’s to have.”

After the frame was raised, she insisted on boarding it tightly, and then discarded two or three loads of shingles that were brought, because of their poor quality. George ventured to suggest clap-boarding, to which she objected at once.

“Nay, nay, George; I say I waänts good pure shingles, its more like thatchwork, I like it better.” And then when all was ready for the inside work, she made great ado, and talked long and loud to try and convert the people to her idea of “stuffing,” as she called it. Few agreed with her, but loads of tan-bark were brought, and the structure stuffed as she desired, the bark being packed in between the inside and outside sheathings; and the wainscoting, which was put on at a height of three feet about the rooms, was something beautiful and unique, being made of yel-

low pine, with now and then a strip of ash that brightened and gave it character; the floors were of hard wood, and when all was complete, "They must be hoiled," said John, "else th' owd 'ooman weant niver come in wi' us, she loves things done fur to staäy, an' the 'ouse'll last longer nor we uns."

Last, but not least, came the building of an oven in the forest near, which Rachel insisted was something not to be dispensed with. The one they had in the West was the pattern, and everything worked in their favor, for the solid foundation of stone necessary was waiting their use.

"This way," said Rachel, hurrying on through chips, shavings and stones with a half dozen people after her, trying in vain to keep pace with her rapid steps; "here, here it is, the very feller we waänts for the bottom o' the hoven, come on John 'Ardy."

"Sure enough," said Violet, who was always at Rachel's right hand, and in this matter as interested as Jed, who was helping daily, doing whatever he could.

"Aye! this is just what's waänted; now build up an' over it, an' when the box o' stone is done, put another wall roun' the outside, leavin' room fur to make fire on the three sides o' the hoven,

as well as in it; an' big boulders for dooars we wants to keep heat all in."

"Laugh ye men o' Hyde; but them does best who laughs last, an' when it's done not one o' ye but shall eat the roast pig, an' the turkey an' the bread as we'll bake in it; go ahead now, John 'Ardy'll tell the rest," and off she started, with "Come Jed! come Vilit! I'se goin' home, I'se tired."

The advent of the Hardy's in Hyde might well be compared with the entrance of a right royal family, covered with gold lace and titles, into one of the smallest of New England cities to-day. Rachel and Janey were the chief attractions, and love was lavished on the little girl as freely as comments on the mother, who challenged the opinions of all, and openly and freely worked her way with an entire disregard to "what will they think and say," something remarkable then, as now, creating the same ripple of wonder and careless laugh among country rustics, that they themselves would create in fashionable society; and rather than seek to avoid her, they improved all opportunities to acquaint themselves with her peculiarities. She greeted them kindly, went to the sewing circle "to gie them a bit o' a joke," she said. Nancy added, "To make yourself

ridiculous and a laughing-stock ; I wish you could keep your head out of other people's business." But her mother answered,

"Hold thy silly tongue, lass; ye has yet to learn I'se not to be held by thy foolishness. I hae a way o' mi own, an' if they chooses to make sport o' it, then they'll hae a chance; to the circle I goes."

Nancy was unlike the rest, and it was a marvel, that with her primitive surroundings in the forest home, she should bring with her an element that was exactly suited to the life which differed so entirely from that of the hardy settlers. Restless and dissatisfied she must have been, if, in the wilderness, the customs of another section of the states filled her mind's eye; her language was pure, and savored little of the inheritance which blent entirely with Janey's utterances, and tintured Ruth's words with its accent.

To Ruth all the care and the burdens of the days, as they came, would be given; and while there might, yes must be longings whose unfulfilled requirements would cause the lines in her face to grow deeper, she would not suffer more than Nancy, perhaps not as much, since her spirit was a peace to herself continually. She was a ready helper, a willing and ambitious worker,

and however much of care and work was brought, her soul would sing the song of contentment. The difference in the two natures was striking, and kept one thinking of the gulf that lay between them; the tie of consanguinity revealing no likeness between the two, and Ruth was to Nancy, not a sister, but a mother, full of consideration, and ever endeavoring to shapen in a pleasing mold the incongruities which her sister looked upon as calamity.

Nancy gave Ruth little pay for her pains and care; still motherly patience never gave out, and with a purpose that shone steadily on through all her acts, like a light swung over the sea, she was faithful to every duty. Sometimes, when there was extra work on hand, and with the care of it all, "at her heels," as Mrs. Chubbuck expressed it, her mother kept switching her off the track. Ruth came to places where she stood still, and delivered a strong lecture to both Nancy and her mother, which was only a matter of commendation, a praiseworthy act on the part of the good and faithful heart, whose life was filled to overflowing. Her mother, at such times, recognized the justice of the position she took, and would say, "Aye, Ruthy love, ye do hae a hard time; I'll go seat mysel' out o' your way."

Nancy rebelled, as of course she must with her nature, and threw into the face of her best friend the gravel of her discontent. Ruth stood firmly, however, and at last tears came to her sister's relief, and she would inevitably go from her presence crying, and declaring that nobody loved her, and death was better than life; while Ruth, turning to her work, thought, that is the only way for Nancy, now she will feel better after the storm, and run along with a steadier gait for awhile, and while she would fain have it different, she nevertheless accepted what must be, with good grace and quiet strength, belonging to a superior mind and well balanced organization.

Janey rarely received a reprimand, there being in her temperament a musical undertone, whose voice rose steadily, and with every action mingled sweetness of sound, which rendered her a harmonious little helper. Ruth often called her a music box—a most appropriate title.

Hardy's oven, "strangest idee," Mrs. Chubbuck declared, that she ever "heerd of," was finished, and the people came far and near to behold the marvel; the large-throated stone oven, with its small straight chimney, finished with a top of funnel shaped sheet-iron, that sat like a stove-pipe on its head, and was a capital index to

its locality, for through a clearing in the wood it became visible from a distance.

“After all,” said Squire Loomis, “that house and oven are a great addition to Hyde, and with the changes of the years, I will warrant, its attraction will be greater instead of less. The old lady knows what she is about. She is funny, but good and smart.”

Ah! yes, even Deacon Rayne went to see that oven in the wilderness, and before the family were settled in their new home, “Hardy’s Oven” claimed not only attention but respect, and by common consent the name of the new home.

“The money makes a bit o’ difference wi’ ’um. If we was wi’ out dollars, they’d look wi’ more sidelong glances at us, an’ though we isn’t dal-lackt out they knaäw as we has the dollars to do it wi’, an’ so they has a bit o’ a feelin’, not what I like neither, such as men howt to gie to each other; still it’s a bit o’ a help, an’ I’ll do as I like, an’ tell the truth; aye, that’s just what I’ll do.

No one at “Apple Rest” doubted it, the weeks of her stay producing ample proof that her thought, which ran in its own peculiar channel, must and would give individual expression.

“I am not going to the city with you,” said Nancy, “you needn’t coax nor scold; it makes

no difference about the things that's to be got, you will get what you please, and if I went my face would be fire, the way you'll talk."

"Nancy stop thy talk—nobody waänts ye to go; it was only civil to gie ye an invite, and the pay I gets is thy impudent gab; so much for a gell as wasn't wanted. Thy sisters differ, an' they was welcome born.

"I never asked myself into the world," retorted Nancy.

"No, I knows it, an' for mi own ignorance bears much from ye; see to it, when years come on, that ye be not the mother o' a girl high headed like yourself. But who goes to the city wi' me? Ruth an' Feyther, an' who else?

"I would like to go," said Violet, "if Millie does not object, and take my place, and her eyes looked roguishly into the face of her friend, whom she well knew would as soon put her hands into a hornet's nest, as go to buy furniture with Rachel. She half pitied Nancy, and sometimes thought, if she were in her place, she would do precisely as she did, in this respect. No! Millie had not the courage to face the giggling clerks in the city stores. Rachel knew it, and turning quickly on her heel, she said,

"Come Vilit, natural blossom, ye's not afraid

of the fun i' the stores, is ye? I'll buy ye a pink frock, an' one for Janey an' Nancy too, poor quoloty gell, as has bad time wi' her caperin' mother."

Millie felt the least bit ashamed of the just rebuke, and said to herself, "I will go with her; who cares if people do laugh?"

Ah! yes, who cares? who does not care, would have been more appropriate to each person and period, for people of town or city count few who could exist without feeling the great necessity for the code of the day. All hearts are strung as beads on the thread of life, and with simultaneous movements in one direction, the balance of our outward selves is kept; when, however, one more inspired than another changes its position as a unit, runs off the string, or (which oftener occurs) breaks in twain, and falls, to roll away by itself in search of something well suited to an individual need, no matter how high the aspirations of the soul, its fellows cry, "lo! the peculiarities!" so Millie, though miserable for a time, was not alone in her lack of self-poise.

CHAPTER XIV.

WOLD on one moment, Deacon," cried George to Deacon Rayne, who walked before him toward the still, "I have something to say to you."

The Deacon stopped, of course, though he had come to dread a talk with the Mathematician, as a child dreads the fire.

"Well," he said, as George came up to him, "tell me what you want to, I'm in a hurry this morning."

"I will hasten to communicate what I desire. It is concerning the territory which Simeon claims as his. I am about to do some surveying in that vicinity, and desire to act with certainty. Eli Perkins' land is at the north of your possessions and Simeon's; but is it true that the north line runs from the notch in the wood to the old oak known as the Giant's tree?"

"Yes, yes, that's right, George; Simeon ought to know enough to tell you where his lines are."

"Oh! yes, he thinks he is all right; but 'sure bind, sure find.' We cannot be too certain; well the east line is clear enough, because the bound-

ary is the old turnpike; but now the south and west lines, do they go beyond the old rock at the point where they intersect, or is it this side of it that they unite?"

"You start from the other side of the old rock."

"You intend to say that the south line does not terminate this side of the rock."

"I mean to say it goes clear on there to where them two poplar trees are standing. He knows it."

"Exactly; well, that is all I desire, and in order to have it all straight, I will draw up a quit claim deed for you to sign when Simeon gets in trim to settle with you. You have no objection to my drawing it? I will do it as cheap as Bartram."

"I guess I shant object to taking the money, nor having the deed drawn when he gets ready. I guess you won't have to hurry."

"No; there is plenty of time between this and to-morrow morning. I will call on you with the quit claim and the money. Appoint the hour, if you please."

The Deacon stopped in his tracks; his hurry had passed like a dream from his mind.

"What do you mean?"

"Exactly what I say, Deacon. I am not balking in the track of prevarication. I am about to

transact a simple matter of business between you and Simeon, an agent or intermediate friend—a sort of mediator. Will nine o'clock suit you well?"

"Yes, yes," said the Deacon, whose mingled wonder and rejoicing rendered the expression of his countenance, one which would hardly admit of a true delineation. Glad to be the recipient of money: really sorry (oh! spirit of evil that he was) to be baffled, that his prediction must be false; and over all this, the surprise. How could Simeon have got so much money? Ah! he was not there the night of the donation, no; and wonder of wonders, no one had told him of the thirty eagles. Time, which makes all things straight, and also reveals secrets, will put it into the head of some one to tell it by and by, and straightway from human lips the word will run wandering down the lines to touch at last the Deacon's ear, and he will incline his head to listen, nod, and wink and say, ah! ah! yes, yes; I thought Simeon was a little smarter'n common men. That supplementary happening will do our small-souled, grey-eyed Deacon a world of good, and not a mortal in Hyde feel any bad result from it.

George was promptly on hand, and carried a quit claim deed, all ready for the Deacon to sign,

predicate on the scrimped pattern of the old warrantee, and also a new warrantee deed, dated this day.

“There!” he said, as Deacon Rayne signed the quit-claim, and folding the paper, George still holding in his hand the roll of bills, put it into his pocket; “now, Deacon, here is a clean warrantee deed that you will please sign, and make the thing straight.”

“Another deed? I don’t want to sign two papers for nothin’. That one quit-claim is enough for me to swear to.”

“No objection to giving him this clear deed. It is only a true and valid proceeding—amounts to the same thing as selling the place anew to Simeon.”

“Hem,” growled the discomfited man, “what more can he want than that there quit-claim? You must be a fool.”

“See here, Deacon, you have signed the quit-claim like a man, and you have not as yet received the money. Now sign this, and I will pay you the money.”

“I guess you’ll pay me that money, or you’ll get what the law can give you.”

“Hold on ; keep cool, my dear sir, and let me

read this paper, that you may see to it that I have the boundaries correct."

"The devil and all his imps! take them boundaries! give me that money! keep me here half the forenoon, with your nonsense!

George put the roll of bills into his pocket and, rising, said:

"I shall not deliver to you three hundred dollars until such time as you are ready to sign this paper."

The Deacon raised his hand and, in his anger, might have struck him, had not George taken a step nearer and, fastening his keen eye upon him, in a powerful tone, said:

"Put down your hand! you need not menace me, seeking to turn me from my object. I am not afraid of words or blows, and I say once and for all, if you will sign this paper I will give you the money. You can do as you please."

"Go, and take your money!" shouted the Deacon, "and I'll have you arrested before night."

"I shall certainly have you for company then, for by the gods, Deacon Rayne, you are a swindler!"

"What do you say?"

"I say you are a swindler, and the proof is in my pocket."

"Set down, set down," said the Deacon, who knew his opponent too well to believe him guilty of a falsehood; "set down and explain this, George. I guess I don't understand."

"Very well; the first thing I must do, is to read the paper; will you hear it?"

"Yes, yes."

He finished the reading and put the question:

"Is that correct? Are the boundaries right?"

"What ails you, George? You're looney; of course they be; hain't I told you so, over and over?"

"Do not be too fast, Deacon; now let me read this old deed; you are sure that you will listen?"

"Go ahead," was the ready reply.

"There you have it," said George; "this deed was constructed at your desire, and by your directions, and the difference between the two descriptions of boundary lines makes two acres and a-half short measure for Simeon, and that much more for you than is your right; the mortgage was predicated not on this but on the right lines, so you gave him a deed of less than he bought, and took a mortgage on more than he had. Now, the quit-claim which, through my instrumentality, you have, unconsciously, but justly, signed, cleans up this past transaction, and with you for-

a guide, I have drawn a new deed, a clean and honest paper ; will you sign it or not ?”

“Some mistake,” said the Deacon, who was shaking for fear of having this, like other mistakes which George had rectified, thrown in his face.

“Some mistake ; I never did such a thing a purpose, and now, George, if you wont go and report that for an honest fact, I’ll sign the other.”

“I have no desire to retaliate, although your treatment of me has been of late anything but cordial and friendly.”

“Wall, wall, never mind, George, I don’t allus understand you.”

“You understand me in this matter, I hope ?”

“Yes, I do ; I guess you must have thought me a crooked man for business,” and a sickly smile overspread the meagre face, as he dipped his pen into the ink, and reached out for the paper.

“Two witnesses,” said George ; “hello there !” and he hailed Squire Loomis, who chanced to be in sight with, “Come in, Squire ; you have saved us a journey. Come in and swear the Deacon.”

So the matter was accomplished ; another of George’s blue ribbons fluttered out like the wing of a young bird, who having tested the air, knew its strength. The money was paid, and justice done, and when he told Simeon, and gave into his

hands a paper which was "unpolluted by meanness," as he affirmed, the latter spoke from his heart, satisfactorily and conclusively.

"They are my freedom papers, Mr. Bean. A man once more ; can I ever repay you ?"

"Yes, sir," was the straightforward answer, "by doing for another what I have tried to do for you. A manner most agreeable and after the laws of God."

"Oh ! dear, dear, I'se tired," said Rachel, when they returned from the city ; "o' tea, mother Charity, I want's a sup."

"I should think you would ; you've been gone since eight o'clock, long enough to buy the town out."

"We'se bowt enough, an' all o' the younguns 'll be satisfied, even to quoloty Nancy ; we'se got a lot o' things ; oh ! dear, dear, I'se tired."

"Well, don't try to tell me a word ; just eat your supper ; its been a waiting more'n an hour ; you couldn't bring out what you bought."

"Aye, but we did, for Jed. went wi' us an' we'se left the big load at Ardy's Hoven ; but I'se got summat for ye, mother Charity ; here's John wi' it now ; its a nice, good, beautiful chair, with seat an' back full o' holes ; a chair that rocks."

"Good land ! who on earth expected I'd have

a present? but there's the old sign; I cut my nails on Monday morning and never thought of a red fox's tail; that's the old sign, and true for once."

"Aye, but who'd ha' thought on the fox's taail if ye hadn't a told o' it."

"That's the secret of it; you must be told, and then not think of it."

"That's a Yankee gittin' up; but we'se got good things, an' wi' all the things, a great, long, beautiful, soft made seat, wi' back an' two rollin'-over ends that's just the thing for gells an' their sweet'earts. Nancy'll be the one to sit on it; Ruth has no time for sweet'earts. Come on, Nancy and Janey, and unroll the big bundle o' calico; pink it is like the roses, an' there's enough o' it to make frocks an' shawls for Vielit, an' Nancy, an' Janey.

"Shawls!" said Nancy, contemptuously, "who ever wants a calico shawl?"

"Nancy," her mother cried, "will I ever get a bit o' anything that ye'll find naw fault wi'?" and tears filled the eyes of Rachel, for she was very tired, and only the interposition of Violet, prevented a "sad caperin'," as Janey phrased it.

"Now, now, Nancy, you are too bad, for the pink is beautiful, and will be very becoming; I selected some buttons for you, to be set on the outside of the waist, and we bought lining, hooks

and eyes, and all. I am as proud as a queen of mine, and we will make them up with pretty, little capes, with scalloped edges, bound with the same, oh! we have had a splendid time, hunting for furniture, and made the grandest bargains.

Ruth looked at Nancy as if to say, look out, lest a storm should rise, and her mother, too tired to talk, was forced to go to her room and rest. She was not really strong, although enduring much, in a certain way; anything like real work exhausted her, and being always thin, her pale face and large eyes, at such times, made her look like a walking ghost, as Mrs. Chubbuck averred.

Waters which are never so much riled, settle at last, and when the oil of an established change was really spread on the turbulent sea, mother Charity stood, in the sacred quiet at "Apple Rest," giving thanks for the calm that lay before her.

"Not that I'm sorry, no, no; I'm thankful to the Lord I took 'em in; but work is work, and I was gettin' so confused, I didn't know where my head was, half the time. George confused me, and they twisted him up, especially Rachel, and its only yesterday he started to feed the chickens with a whole pan of mince pie meat in his hand, goin' right by the meal I'd fixed for 'em. I'm

glad for his sake, he can think of his celestials in some peace, and he's never squinted at Venus, nor none of 'em as to that, since Rachel has come to us, without her goin' after him. She beats all, and so does he, and between the two they'd keep a dozen in tow, and nobody would ever get anywhere or do anything."

Mrs. Chubbuck was talking to herself, but Violet overheard and agreed with her, smoothing out the corners of the sentiment in her usual way.

"They are two of the best hearts that ever beat in mortal frames."

"I expect Jed'll come in by the side of 'em, Vilit. I reckon he's a cuttin' ahead of all of us, in your opinion, eh?"

"You need not look at me over your glasses, for if you think so, so it must be to you. 'As a man thinketh, so is he.'"

"Well, he's good and handsome, and smart. I hope it'll be fair salin'."

"We have not chartered a steamer yet, Mrs. Chubbuck; my mother would be appalled at the thought."

"I 'spose she would; I shouldn't be in a hurry; you've got so much common sense about everything, that I expect you'll have a guide in this. Perfect love casteth out fear, ah! Vilit, I am an old

woman to-day, but I remember well, how Nehemiah came to belong to me, and I to him ; and how the uncertain feelin' that came over me when I thought of marryin' somebody else, never troubled me when he was around. That somebody else had brighter eyes, a handsome face, and a better start in the world ; but I took to Nehemiah as naturally as a duck to water, and there wasn't a bit of fear within ten miles of me, and when I get to thinkin' of him away over yonder, clean out of sight of all the fuss and the fret, I can't hardly wait to be called for. I expect to be with him in Heaven ; there's no marryin' nor givin' in marriage there, according to Scripture, but that refers to the walks of earth as I understand it, and I feel sure of seein' all my people, and being one with 'em there ; yes, nearer together than ever before. 'Death, like a narrow sea divides that land from ours' ; that's true ; and when we get so tired we can't walk here, then is the time the wings God give us will take us over there. I thought, last fall, that I should be there before winter was gone, but I'm as well again as I was ; George's hemlock medicine has helped the poor, old oil bags wonderfully, and as long as I can work, I'm willin' to stay and do whatever my hands find to do. Oh ! hum ; I aint half so good as I ought to be."

“I thought you were a good deal better than you could afford to be,” said Jed., surprising them with his presence. “You had a heap of Christianity aboard when you took the Hardy swarm. I have just come from the oven, and carried little Janey to school, on my road over here; she has coaxed the Professor to let her have her fiddle in sight; she cried a week, and was perfectly miserable. She promised to ‘study good’ if he would let her bring it, and the child takes it to and from school, daily. I believe she will startle the world with her music yet; what a blessed little beauty she is. Here is a letter, Violet. I came over on purpose to bring it.”

“Oh! it is from the city; they must be at home; I hardly expected them so soon,” and hastily breaking the seal, she read it. Her face grew white. Jed. sprang to her side and, putting out both hands to him, her eyes falling on him with a strange, wild look, as if she craved a much needed help, he caught her fainting form, which lay as lifeless in his arms, as if she was dead.

“Oh! God!” he cried, “what will we do?”

“Take her right into the other room, and put her on the lounge,” replied Mrs. Chubbuck; “shall I help you?”

“Oh! no, she is light as a feather;” and with

a face scarcely less white than hers, he bore her to the lounge, laying her tenderly down and whispering, "sweet little flower, Violet darling;" but no sign of life was there, no breath perceptible, and while Mrs. Chubbuck called Millie, got camphor, hot water and flannels, he clasped her hands without effect, the tears rolling over his face, and his forehead beaded with the perspiration of fear.

"She is certainly dead," said Mrs. Chubbuck; "no warmth in her limbs, her forehead cold; oh, my poor, sweet girl, the light of the old home, the love of her mother, we can't let her die; what shall we do?"

"Aye, I'se come," sounded the voice of Rachel, "I laid on the bed, an' I heard Vielit cry out to me, and John 'Ardy he telled me, 'nonsense, owd 'ooman,' but I heard it again, an' here I is," and looking at the three who stood tearfully over the prostrate form, her face changed into that of a marble woman, as, pushing them almost rudely aside, she said,

"Stop cryin' every one o' ye; she's not dead, and pulling her dress open, she laid one hand over the cold and motionless heart, and the other at the back of her neck.

"Jed. lay the palms o' your hands flat agin the

soles o' her feet; summat sudden has hit the flower, but never ye mind," and there upon her knees, her face growing solidly white each moment, the strange Rachel sat, her eyes wide open, and their lids palsied as it were. It was a sight that filled them with emotion, and almost fear.

Twenty minutes, which seemed an hour, and a little half-born breath came fluttering through the white lips.

As quick as thought Rachel turned her upon her right side, and began making rapid strokes over her back.

"Oh!" gasped Violet.

"Aye, darlin', lie still," and she worked with redoubled energy.

"Jed," came from the sufferer's lips.

"Aye, he's here, wait a bit," said Rachel; "mother o' Charity gie us one tea-spoon o' brandy in three o' hot water, only one."

"Now, sweet flower," and she passed her arm about her, "rise an' drink, ye's all right. Jed. come and sit here, just hauld her an' keep her warm, don't let her talk, not yet. I'se tired; I'se faint, an' waänts air," and she staggered to the door, with Millie following.

"It's done, it's done," she said to herself. "Millie get some cold water, dash it in mi face, let

mi get mi hands in it too. Gie mi a sup o' tea an' a bite o' bread, an' I'll go in an' lie down a bit. Oh! dear, I'se tired—strength has gone out o' me; but all for sweet Violet. Oh! I'se glad, I'se glad."

Ah! Millie Dean you will never forget that day, and the dark cloud that hung over Apple Rest. You know too well how Violet felt; how the poor heart trembled when she read that her mother, that one dear friend, whose place no other could fill, was dead; her body had returned from its western journey minus the soul that made it warm, the living, loving part, that was Violet's precious treasure. That poor heart would never beat again you were very sure had not Rachel, always eccentric, laid her warm hand upon it.

What a fadeless photograph this scene cast on the sensitized plate of your memory; how you loved this woman from the wilderness in that hour when, with rapid exhaustion of herself, she seemed a human life-saving machine, bringing back that girl who lay so cold, and as you thought dead, and the love that was born in your heart that day, never will lose itself within the woods of change, or on the sea of fluctuating life. Rachel felt it, and thanked you for the tea and bread you

so readily brought, for the smiles you lavished on her, but more than all, for the strong thought that arose and stood beside her as a lasting friend.

“Let John 'Ardy go to the hoven; I'se to stay here all day an' all night, an' Jed's to stay,” and she whispered to Mrs. Chubbuck, “If she goes to the funeral; I'se afeard there's trouble wi' her heart, the blood goes in faster nor it gets out. She'd best not go, what'll we do?”

“I will go, and Millie with me; but she will want to see her mother's face.”

“Aye, I knaäws; but she mustn't die.”

“No, no; her mother would say the same, poor child.”

The heavens wept next day, and a pale curl-shaded face was pressed against the window-pane, watching them out of sight, they who were to attend the funeral of that blessed mother. Jed. stood beside her, and his mother and Rachel were there also.

Their hearts beat with united fear, and Jed. was growing weak; his limbs trembled, even as his voice.

The carriage out of sight, and Violet sat with her hand in his, the little white cold hand, whose very nails were blue with lack of life; but her breath came deeper now, a strength, born of

heaven, came slowly upon her, filling the blood in every vein, with impetus that caused friction and warmth, and through her tears she said,

“A blessed something has fallen on me. The Father has heard my prayer. I must not weep, it is selfish, my mother has found the Heaven she was fitted for, and I shall find her by and by. No, no, not yet,” as Jed. instinctively shuddered, “I will stay with you, and she will watch over us both—poor, lonely father, he will miss her so, but I could never stay with him; he has many friends of his own; I shall stay here.”

Jed. did not say it, it was not the right time; but he thought, we will have a home of our own.

CHAPTER XV.

THE dark day was passed, and after the clouds and rain came sunshine, which fell on Apple Rest as if to whisper to the soul of the stricken Violet of the peace which passeth understanding. She felt it, and looking into the eyes of mother Charity said,

“He doeth all things well; I dare not mourn for her.”

“No, no; them that’s gone we never mourn for; it is for us who are left alone, and sorry as I was that you couldn’t go to the funeral, I felt when I got there, and knew we couldn’t look on the face, that even your weakness was all right. It would have hurt you Vilit.”

“Oh! I know it, Mrs. Chubbuck, and now I shut my eyes, and see her, bright and loving as when she said good bye to me last. It will not be so very long before I go to her. I never can be real strong and well you know; that terrible sickness years ago left the track of its feet within, and, it seems to me, jarred the mainspring of nervous life, so that its tick is irregular and weak. I believe I understand myself thoroughly, and I

think it a real wonder that I came back to life. I felt when I read the words as if a cold, vice-like hand clutched at my very heart; and then it seemed like drifting away from myself—not so painful either after the first cold touch of the hand.”

“Vilit, I know you want to stay here with me, and I want you should. You know I hain’t got any relatives, not one nearer than cousins, except old Uncle Bije, and he’s blind and lame, and gone clean back into his second childhood; and I’m just a going to call you my girl, and I mean it. Millie’ll stay with us here until that dark-eyed chap in the city comes after her. She gets three or four letters a week now, and he must be earnin’ good wages to afford so much time to write in. I hope he’s good as well as learned. Millie is one of the best girls I ever knew—but you want to stay with me, don’t you?”

Violet bowed her head, for the thanksgiving in her heart came up and met the tears that fell, and she could not speak.

“That settles it,” and Mrs. Chubbuck gathered her close to her heart, “now you’re my girl; poor old Charity Chubbuck has found a daughter. I hope Nehemiah knows it. I wonder if he does?”

Violet's cheeks were paler through the days that followed. Simeon and Belinda thought of her kindly, and came weekly to see her. Jed. took her out to ride almost every day, and George looked anxiously at her, and longed for the day when she would come again to the school house, for up to the date of her sorrow she had been with him every Wednesday afternoon helping the scholars with the songs which enlivened their school house life, and it was a great blank that fell in their midst when her visits ceased. Her voice was gone. "Not my lungs," she said, "but my stomach."

"Aye," said Rachel, "that's where the voice comes from, folks live wi' their stomachs, but they doesn't know it. Lot's o' folks thinks their hearts is turned wrong when it's nowt but their gizzards. I can prove it to ye. If ye sees a bad sight ye looks wi your eyes, an' what they does is to telegraph news to the brains, an' the minute the brains feels this, so does the stomach, for the nerves is like a railroad fra one to tother, an' ye gets sick, or ye faänts or what all. An' don't ye see the one graät nerve as does such good work, got hit when the bad news come to ye, an' it can't do nowt but flippir; aye, ye caänt sing till while ye gets strong."

Janey was glad when the day came, and George's mother, Aunt Patty Bean, took great delight in joining her, as together they sang, "The rose tree in full bearing."

Whenever Rachel heard this song she became agitated, and once, when Violet and Aunt Patty were spending the day at the oven, she said quickly,

"Vielit, love, sing it naw more, it souns like foretellin', an' makes me cry. I haätes foretellin' soun," and she cried, while they marvelled at her meaning.

Wisely from mortal eyes, sometimes the sorrowing secrets of the years are kept, and smiling to-day, whose warmth must feel the curdling chill of grief, knows not the coming of the future cloud. What can be in store for Violet?

I. L. O. B. R. flourished, "like a green bay tree," Mrs. Chubbuck said, and when the Spring came, as of course it must, and Rachel proposed to have a bit o' a time at the hoven, it was decided that a lodge meeting, with "Blue Ribbons" at the head, would be just the best way to celebrate.

Violet was better, bodily, and began to realize what her friend and physician, Rachel, told her.

"Aye, mi dear, ye'll hae strength to bear trouble whene'er it comes, if the nerves an' the

blood is all right, for it's on the body the mind an' heart forever sits. It's true, Vielit; does ye think ye would enjoy a beautiful sermon, an' have a tooth pulled out at the same time? I tells ye, Vielit, it's strength ye wants; take the bitters I makes, an' do just as I tells ye, an' the days to come'll tell ye as I was right, an' knaäws all I'se about. Aye, I does."

Yes, Violet doubted it not; for the days brought the proof as predicted, and she was better. She could not sing very much, but her smile was brighter; not forced, as through the first days of her grief, when living seemed so often like feeling her way in the dark through a forest, moving carefully around and crawling slowly and painfully over the trunks of trees; not that she thought less of her mother; less? oh! no, she grew nearer daily to the guardian angel who floated over her in dreams, and of whose new life she felt so truly, "Angels see men. I know my mother cannot go so far away she will not see me," she said, and the light in her eye was only a deeper blue, reflecting as it did the ocean of purity beneath.

April days are beautiful, breezy and sweet, so full of balm, one learns to look into the face of nature with expectation of reading a long full page of promise. Crocus blooms were only

voices that said blushing roses and lilies, with their whitened cups and bells, that ring in young birds throats; warm, sunshiny summer, that lies just a look ahead of you. Rejoice and be glad; how every year these sentinel months challenge us with a watchword; how we ransack the house from attic to cellar, throwing the ingrate dust out our windows, never stopping to think these hands of ours will be dust sometime; no, we think of nothing but the rejuvenation, the refitting, regar-nishing, an iteration and reiteration of nature, the mutability of her immutability, as infectious as it is real, and clear from the ploughed fields beyond the sight of the door of home, on up through the garden, whose area measured two good house lots; whose fence was made of currants, and raspberries, and gooseberries; whose paths were defined by mint, catnip, motherwort, rue, tansy, and sage, with here and there green trees of caraway, fennel and dill; those festival seeds that filled ample pockets on the day of Sabbath and were as apropos to the sermon, as cran-berry sauce to Thanksgiving turkey, clear up to the flat stone at the door, the breath of nature's retouch and resurrection came, and it was no wonder that it set our wits working, even as our hands, while day after day, turbaned heads

held eyes that peered into everything, searching for dust that ready hands would willingly cast on the altar of sacrifice—spring cleaning! The smoke of bonfires, and in-door dust-laden atmosphere, were synonomous, and out with the seeds stowed away in bureau drawers, the corn to be planted and all, went the abhorred dirt, and then just think of it, mother nature smiled at our so-called sacrifice, as she always does, regarding our cast-off particles, her easily gotten profit, and from the boot legs at the root of the grape vine, the wood ashes in the grass that woke sweet white clover blossoms into life, to the dust we swept into the garden gate, all was utilized, and our buried selves were resurrected, amplified, and supported by the reversion of natural cause and effect.

Perhaps it is always so, even in the souls economy, which is an outgrowth of physical entities with their needs, a light that glorifies the tabernacle and creates daily evidences of immortality. Ah! yes, as Mrs. Chubbuck said, “the wings that are hidden from sight, unfold and crave activity, plume and carry us beyond the bounds of earth, when our limbs refuse to go. Worms and butterflies, even the poorest of us caterpillars may have strong wings, and reflect in shape and flight the design of divinity.

With thought and work and palpitating life, such a spring like this lay over Apple Rest, and a charming day, whose name was Wednesday, April 5th, dawned on Apple Rest, and Hardy's Oven.

Ruth was more than busy. Nancy had helped her by putting the best room to rights, and Millie and Violet had made a donation in the shape of one two-three cake, and a mammoth chicken pie, "to be eaten cold, or warmed over in the oven, just as they please," said Mrs. Chubbuck.

School had come to a close, so George was at liberty and on hand early.

A respect to the night, as well as the bodily needs, was the foundation of early hours both sides of sunset, so they were in good season, and at home and in bed by nine o'clock—good old style whose smooth, pure custom brought fewer wrinkles than we see to-day; cosmetics were not so valuable then as now, and the trade in life less lively. No need in those days of scraping a face to find the complexion; every girl or nearly every one had roses of her own, and when their color changed with years and care, a faint tinge of vermillion, lingered like the prayer of day, when near the rim of night, it leaves a long pure line of amber touch with blushes, for the evening star

to look at when it rises. Mother Charity's face was after this description ; girlhood, though drifting sooner into the sea of womanhood, did not entirely die, and these dear grandmothers kept a little youth beneath the care through all the years, just as they keep their rich cake through all the year, ready for extra company when it came.

The oven was filled to repleteness with savory food, and was a novel sight. A young roaster lay in state with beautifully browned sides, which by the solidly steady heat of this wonderful oven, were as evenly painted as if the color had been laid on with a brush.

"It's a steady fizzle ye gets frae that hoven," said Rachel, "not too done at one corner an' raw at tother, but done straäte through, as even baked as the stones theirselves an' its nate-yurs oven is that—aye, bread and piggy an' all done fit to eat."

The assembled company lavished their praises, and deemed the verdict of Rachel nothing more than just and right.

Conversation floated in and out, likewise the knitting needles which clicked on every hand, for each female had a handy bag, one which was just a strip of silk or cotton, gathered at one end, which was sometimes graced by a bow or tassel, and at the other a single shirring, which run an

inch from the edge, and admitted of a silk string, which, running entirely through it, crossed its track and was invited to come out an opening in each side, thereby making two silken handles, and when the knitting and pocket handkerchief were inside, and the aperture closed by the drawn string, the inch of edge left a ruffling which was a dainty finish ; taste was alive then as now.

At three o'clock, precisely, everything was on the table, and a right-royal dinner—supper it was.

“Come mi' dears,” called Rachel, who was in high glee, “come on to the feast, there's more here nor is fit for us, an' a good deal o' sweet stuff we doesn't waänt, but we'll take our pick, from the caperin' mother down to quoloty Nancy, but I waäynt wait on table, an John 'Ardy he says as he waäynt.”

“I beant learnt in it,” growled John, slowly, “I beant use to it, an' naw mon as waänts to make fool o' hissel.”

“I'll do part of it” said Mrs. Chubbuck, “and Squire Loomis and Eli can do the rest.”

“Aye, that's good” said Rachel, “but see here we must hae a bit o' a blessin, let the Squeer do it, Blue Ribbins 'ill maäke it too long.”

It required a moment or two to reduce the smiles, which in George's case was a hearty laugh,

meanwhile Rachel calling, "Be still I saäy—be still an' get the blessin'."

Ruth whispered in her ear, and with a sudden dropping of her eyes, which fortunately Squire Loomis did not see, Rachel, with her elbows on the table, inclined her head forward to rest on her hands, and sat like a stone waiting the words which fell appropriately and honestly from the lips of the good man.

"Now then," she said, as if relieved, "we'll talk wi' the pig an' the chickens an' all."

The shout which followed her remark was a relief, for not one of them all but had bitten their lips from her first speech. She was a perfect child in this matter, for while her feeling was real, and made her request in the honesty of her heart, she realized George's proclivity to lengthy speeches, and although she wanted him to ask the blessing, thought she risked a lengthy prologue, and could not avoid saying so.

"I wish she could ever keep her thoughts to herself," whispered Nancy to Ruth.

"Never mind," the sister-mother answered, meanwhile she trembled, fearing Nancy might leave the table, and to Ruth it was a pleasure to feel that they could have so pleasant a supper in their new home; she realized the kindness of their

new friends, and strove to keep their friendship.

The meal over, an adjournment to the best room was made by the male portion, and when all the dishes were washed and the kitchen cleared up, the females joined them, and an informal lodge meeting held, which was given to the interests of the people, and resolved itself into a sort of inquiry meeting, with reference to the best methods of furthering the temperance reform.

As to interest, they were united, being a unit in feeling, and desirous of killing the worm which gnawed at the tree of individual liberty in their midst.

George was more strenuous than his fellows in expression; the fire of his feeling rose with greater power, and the wealth of language which he possessed, made his speeches welcome always. It may not be wrong to say that Squire Loomis and Eli Perkins sometimes differed substantially with him, in the expression of the one sentiment, for the sole purpose of getting him warmed up.

“How he will cut our limbs and hew down our trees, walking rough shod through all our theories,” said the Squire. “It is music to me, and when those hands go running through the hair on his head, which he throws back at an angle of forty-five degrees, look out for a settlement.”

A few weak expressions on the part of the Squire had the desired effect this afternoon, and George unbosomed himself and did himself great justice in a speech of an hour. After he had given the dimensions, not only of the enemy, Rum, but those who declared themselves warriors, whose mission would not be ended until the last breath of the tyrant was drawn ; after he had rung the changes of the Squire's remark, that they must work their way easily through the ranks of the enemy, he closed by rendering a verdict which, like a parting shot, went closer home than he dreamed, and had he really known, he would sooner have cut off his right hand.

“Brothers,” he said, “the best man among us, the man who has as white a soul as any man need to possess, whose perceptive faculties are equal to making him a perfect power of insight, on whom we might and ought to rely, in the dark days of a nation's peril, this man says to me in tones of calm security, we must work our way easily through the ranks of our enemy. He does not know what he says ; he realizes not the power of the strong-handed enemy. If it clutched at his throat as it does at others, if his only bright-eyed son, the pride of his fatherly heart, had succumbed to the wine cup, ah ! if this were the case,

my sober, honest and intelligent friend, would not waste his urbanity on so unworthy a presence ; there would be no measure too stringent to adopt, no manner too abrupt to rescue his only child from the poisonous inoculation of old King Alcohol. We are not looking for so sorrowful a change as this, knowing the straight-forward, clear-eyed boy who is our friend, and it is an insupposable picture which I draw, but let me hasten to the close, and touch the point at which I aim. There are other fathers, who, unlike Mr. Loomis, suffer daily, and at the hands of their own. Mothers watching in fear for the coming homeward of their boys ; mothers whose hearts, well used to this sorrow, beat quickly with fear, as they trembling list the coming step. Is he sober, or is he drunk? Oh! let us make the woes of others our own ; let their cases, with their crying needs be answered as if it were ourselves who called to ourselves. I say give the enemy no quarters, and my cry is the Macedonian appeal, "Come over and help us !"

Squire Loomis' face was pale, and his wife laid down her knitting work, ere George had half finished his speech, and when he closed, her eyes, tear-filled, would not meet those of her husband, whose heart, like her own, was trembling.

“Brothers,” said Squire Loomis, “I feel that our friend Bean is right and I am wrong. He has, as usual, given us a most salutary lesson, and I am willing to say he is the man who should lead us. It is true we are too prone to not consider the safety of others when we ourselves are in a harbor of security. Let us try to do it, and rely through time not only on all we may do ourselves, but upon that divine help whose presence is forever near.”

“Aye,” cried Rachel, “in or out o’ order, I say let’s hae a bit o’ music; Janey bring the fiddle.”

“I second the motion,” said George, “and I,” “and I,” ran pleasantly around the room, and Janey, in the little wood rocker her mother brought from the city, made an interesting picture. She sat next Jed., for whom she entertained a most profound admiration and respect.

Little brown fingers tuned the violin, turning the screws this way and that, and feeling the slender neck in her usual tender way, then boldly the bow comes down upon the one loved string, and her birds came readily out.

“There’s lots o’ birds in the fiddle to-night,” she whispered to Jed., “I wish Aunt Patty would sing, when I’ve played a bit, to get the prairie hens an’ the new, little east robins together;” and on

she played, flying clear away at last, and gathering eyes and hearts as one to kneel at the shrine of her natural music. "Born to the fiddle," her mother said, which was indeed most true. At last her notes fell quivering at the feet of her listeners, and looking at Aunt Patty she said:

"Will ye sing, silver voice? I loves to hear ye."

"I will," said Aunt Patty, "what shall the song be?"

"Any one ye choose, I'll find the way; mi fiddle birds fly close to the tune, never ye fear; begin, an' I'll catch the track."

"Flow gently, sweet Afton," Aunt Patty sang and if one could imagine a sweet and powerful voice rising beside a brook, whose music ran in perfect harmony by the side of the voice, with now and then a harmonious chirp of wild birds on the bank beside and around the singer, the dipping of wings and the rustle, too, as from them fell feathered spray, they would then have an adequate conception of the accompaniment which seemed to run under and over, inside and around the voice of Aunt Patty, making of each word a quality, and giving to every note a quivering, trembling, lingering sweetness, that filled the air even after the verse was finished.

"Three cheers for Janey and my good mother,"

cried George, and Janey running across the room to George said, in her quaint, sweet way,

“Teacher, I says, three loud claps for the wooden nutmegs.”

When she returned to her little rocker there was something in it.

“Take it out,” said Jed., “and see how you like it.”

“What is it?” and the dark eyes opened widely.

“Take it out and see.”

“Oh! look, look,” she cried, “see, every one o’ ye,” and lifting the long, narrow box in her arms she set it on the floor near her, and taking her seat in the chair, rested her elbows on her knees, her chin on her hands, and looked intently at the strange something on the floor.

“I sees, I sees,” at last she cried, “a house for the fiddle; come, ye good teacher, tell me, does I read the letters right. It says ‘a box for Janey’s birds.’ ”

“Hurrah! the old cat and all her kittens!” and George came and knelt near, “you read it aright. A beautiful box of boxwood with carved tittle, strong and handsome fastenings,” and he opened the lid carefully, “and lined in true blue.”

“Come, every one o’ ye,” said Janey, Jed. made it, because he just loves me and the fiddle (an’

Vielit wi' us), oh ! the good Jed.,'' and slowly and carefully laying her treasure into its handsome case, she folded her hands complacently and said, "I'se glad its big, to hold green blanket an' all."

CHAPTER XVI.

IT ain't no use, George, the folks are rooted and grounded, as Parson Hunt says, in their own notions, and you spend your breath for nothin'. They wont let the boys go to school I know they wont."

"I wish Parson Hunt was not as old as he is, his mind is naturally well balanced, and we should find in him a strong ally. I verily believe his help would be worth more than all the rest put together, but he is a superannuated old fellow."

"Is that what you call bein' deaf as a haddock and lame in both legs? I can't see how on earth he makes such good sermons as he does—and they ain't the old ones warmed over. I've watched him close enough to know that."

"Well, my dear sister Chubbuck, I shall circumvent the god of ignorance, at all events, for if the people will not consent to send their boys through the summer to school, and I know very well they will not, I will inaugurate evening classes, and thereby serve the children. I think the committee will give me the use of the school house—yes, I know they will, and I can attend to

ten or twenty, three evenings in every week, as well as not."

"What kind of pay do you think you'll get; they wouldn't give you five cents a night."

"Well, if they will furnish some oil lamps, which we need, I can get along. The money part of it I am not thinking of, for I have arranged to do considerable work in surveying, and in haying time I can get work if necessary; I shall get along and for the sake of the coming future, if not the present, I am anxious to do something toward helping men to an appreciation of knowledge. It is a sorrowful fact, and one that stirs the blood in my veins, that the people of Hyde, as a majority, are willing to sit year after year in the same old chair. The small and insufficient knowledge which may be gained at the old school house, during the six months of school, being deemed full measure, upon which they are ready to depend themselves, and recognize it all that is necessary for their children. Why, they cannot know anything for certain, and in their delusion, hug their ignorance to their breasts, and say to me, You must not try to deprive us of the right to our children's labor. We cannot afford to let them go to school through the summer.' I tell you sister Chubbuck, I will fight for these foolish people and starved

children—yes, fight with no regard to pecuniary emolument; do not mention it beside the fact of their great need. It is like a man who sees another on the verge of a precipice, and pauses to extort fifty dollars from him before he renders the life service, and while the poor victim with palsied brain and horror stricken heart, feels in his pocket with trembling fingers for the sum required, exhausted nature gives way, and he falls headlong into the precipice, a shapeless mass, his untimely fate entailing misery on those he leaves behind.

This is the question of to-day. The picture is a just representation of ignorance that dares to play and loves to sit upon the margin of precipices, because it knows no better, and by the right which a true conception of things has given me, I dare to be true to my convictions, but I am alone, single handed and alone."

"George, there ain't no need of your going into a tantrum about folk's schoolin'. You know well enough I'm willin' to do anything under the sun for you, and while it may be all jest as you say—of course I know you ought to be better posted than me, in the needs of heads, I tell you what it is, your shoulders ain't broad enough to carry half nor quarter of Hyde. If you see the best

thing that everybody could do for themselves and the salvation of the whole world besides, you can't make 'em do it, and I don't b'lieve you ought to be upheld in tirin' yourself all out for folks that won't be anything but a dead weight. Where'll you fetch up when you get to be an old man, if you spend every cent as you go? I tell you, you can eat your own puddin' in milk or with molasses, but you can't sweeten things for other folks, for they won't eat it, and its just a waste."

"Nevertheless, I shall do my best to subvert the established ignorance, and if, as you predict, I fetch up in the poor-house, it will be no more than trusting to the ravens to be fed, and when God calls the roll of the ages, I shall be there, as one who, perceiving the truth, dared by *His* help, to practice it. No sir! not if my life depended on it, would I relinquish my hold on truth. Old Gallileo had a hard time of it. All that we owe to science, whose skill is forever on the alert for the benefit of man, some man has laid down a life to gain, not for himself, but another, and I can pray in a poor house and be heard as well as in a palace; better I guess," and with his eyes riveted on the star of a nation's probity, he measured still the distance between the planet and this most glo-

rious orb, gathering more and more of its light to himself, and walking truly in two worlds.

Long strides toward the barn, and then back to the house, he took, while Mrs. Chubbuck, who watched him, said,

“That man has missed his calculations; he don’t belong here; he ought to live up there with Jupiter and the rest of ’em that he watches; bless his heart, I wish he had plenty of money.”

The question what shall be done, lay solved, and straightway efforts to put into practice his design were made and responded to, so that beside Simeon and Jed., there were a half dozen others who came regularly Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday nights to the school house. The large black-board held long rows of figures, and geometrical lines as well, and with the interest manifested by the few who really desired to make progress in study, George was gaining ground. Every day coming nearer some of the things his soul desired, he was not careful to count the hours, and often the old clock tolled out eleven before he came in. Mrs. Chubbuck did not enjoy this, for with her care over him, she could not well go to sleep until he was safely in bed.

It was a bright moonlight night, as she lay looking at the streaks of light that lay on the

floor of her bedroom, and waiting for him to come in, when she started, hearing his voice and also that of a stranger, with him. Both came into the gate and on to the verandah.

"They make noise enough for forty," she whispered.

The door opened, George came in, going quietly to her door, spoke low, as if afraid of waking her suddenly.

"Yes, I hear you George, what is it?"

"I have a man here, a stranger to me, who is worn out with travel. I would like to lay a buffalo robe on the kitchen floor and let him sleep there. He will do no harm."

"Ain't he drunk?"

"I cannot rightly say, but he is used up, there is no harm in his coming in."

"Wall, let him in, but I'll bet a' dollar he's drunk. I guess I'll get up."

"No, no," persisted George, "there is no need of it," but the old lady slipped on a loose dress and slippers, and went out in time to see George holding on to a man who was unable to stand.

"All right," said George, "you cannot navigate with ease," and he endeavored to seat him in a chair, but the poor fellow lost his poise entirely, out went his limbs and he fell sprawling on the

floor, muttering something about people's keeping their furniture still.

George got the buffalo robe and two old carriage cushions, and helped him to roll over on to it. "I, hic, shall be, hic, all, hic, right, hic, in the morning," he stammered, and was off to the land of dreams, by the road of a drunken slumber."

"Drunk as a beast," said Mrs. Chubbuck, "what on earth possessed you to bring him in here."

"Simply because I could not let him die by the wayside. Do not scold me; he was a man who once was a child and had a mother. 'Inasmuch as ye do it unto the least of these, ye do it unto me.'"

"Wall, I'll go to bed; I ain't afraid of him, poor fool; now you go to bed."

"Very well," said George, and when she was out of sight, he brought out the second buffalo robe, and stealing carefully up stairs came down with a blanket and pillow, also an astronomical chart and the huge diary, in which he wrote daily as much at length and with as minute a correctness, as if expected to be called before the bar of Infinite Justice with this very book as reference, and fearing lest some of his precious time be wasted, had also a book containing notes of a survey.

He hardly felt justified in leaving Mrs. Chubbuck down stairs alone, fearing lest the stranger might awake and make some outcry, and he prepared himself a couch in one corner of the kitchen, and setting the lamp where its rays would be sheltered from sight, seated himself, Indian like, upon his low couch, for an hour or two's study. He was too tired to keep awake, and shortly after midnight he blew out his light; drew the blanket over him, and slumbered heavily.

His intention of rising early enough to carry the things away, and also invite the stranger to a bath at the little stone fountain at the back door, before Mrs. Chubbuck came out, thus making him presentable enough to be eligible to a seat at the breakfast table, was ignored by slumber, for the early morning hours passed by with slippered feet, and when Mrs. Chubbuck entered her kitchen, she raised both hands.

"Mercy on us," she exclaimed, "two of 'em, I'll call George, for I daresn't stir up the lions. Good land!"

"Ah!" and George's eyes opened—he sprang to his feet.

"The old cat and all her kittens! I have slept clear through," and he gathered up his bedding

and going toward the door, met Mrs. Chubbuck, who looked as if frightened out of her senses.

“Where did you come from? I was jest goin’ to call you.”

“I slept on the floor for purpose of making all things safe. Wait one moment and I will arouse the sleeper.”

“I’m willin’ you should, for I ain’t used to stirring up animals, but I want the way clear to get breakfast.”

George hastened back, and with a word wakened the man, who, raising himself on his elbow, stared strangely about him.

“You came in with me last night,” said George, “will you rise and prepare yourself to eat breakfast with us?” Mrs. Chubbuck looked at him sharply, as if to say, how do you know whether he is fit to eat with us or not?

“Oh! who are you?” he said, rising slowly; “I don’t know where I am, and hardly know who I am; I must get back my senses how it all happens,” and pushing back a mass of dark brown curls, he revealed a forehead in which George, with the rapidity of thought, read as he looked, an even development of number, order, constructiveness, comparison, wit, and individuality, and in the fullness of his eye, language was enunci-

ated, and he thought, whoever he is, he is more than an ordinary man, and does not rank with the mediocrity of mind.

As his senses came slowly back, the colorless face flushed with partial remembrance, and looking at his strange friends, he said with effort and much feeling,

“I am obliged to you beyond expression. If I were less weak, I would relieve you of my presence at once; as it is, if you will allow me to breakfast here, and take a few hours rest, I will be very thankful. I feel more anxious than you can know; my wife will be alarmed. Is there a person with a fleet horse whom I could engage to ride to the city with a message to her. She has doubtless watched through the long night, and she is not strong. Money is no object,” and he looked the picture of despair.

Jed. will go, thought George. “Yes, sir, I can find somebody; but you would like something to take—you tremble, Deacon.”

“I do; peppermint, camphor, anything; but I am not a deacon. My name is Woods. I am a lawyer, the son of a judge.”

“The very dickens! you do not mean to tell me you are the son of old Judge Woods of the Superior Court?”

“I do,” and while Mrs. Chubbuck got something for him to take, George prepared to go for Jed. “Now I am ready,” he said, “and if you will write a note for your people and give me the directions, I will take it right along—here is pen, ink and paper.”

Mr. Woods’ hand trembled visibly, and it was only a line he wrote.

George took the message and hurried over to Squire Loomis’, finding Jed., as he expected, ready and willing, and with a parting injunction to be sure and say to the woman that nothing had happened to her husband, he returned in time for breakfast, and as filled with enthusiasm, as if he had a paying job on hand.

No allusion was made to the night before, but the political condition of the country, the position of Whigs and Democrats, and the puerility of the chief executive regarding some of the public needs.

George found lawyer Woods a logician whose thoughts were readily and fluently expressed; his forehead examination was simply an index to the general man, and how thought George can it be possible that this man, with all his power, can fall a prey to the tempter. The breakfast over, the two men withdrew to another room, and the ques-

tion found its answer, for the courteous stranger was no coward, and he desired to make and ask an explanation regarding his untimely visit.

“Mr. Bean, I cannot rest until I know the particulars of my entrance here. If you will tell me where you found me, and how your heart warmed toward a stranger. I have only an indefinite idea of some strange sensations passing over me, and the terrible thought that I should fall in the road and be run over and killed. Tell me about it.”

“Well, Deacon, as I guess I had better call you, I rather like it. I was returning from the school house, where I had held an evening school, and when quite near to home, I discovered you, leaning against a fence, and apparently needing help.

“I at once went to you, put my hand on your shoulder, and inquired the cause of your impeded progress ; your answer, though not satisfactorily distinguishable, gave me the knowledge upon which I acted, and putting my arm about you, I helped you along into the house, and with Mrs. Chubbuck’s permission, ensconced you on the floor, for being unable to walk, we could not offer you a room up stairs. That is the whole story, and as to how I came to do it, I should marvel at

myself had I left you in the road, knowing your condition—that is not a part of my religion. I had some misgivings as to how the case might turn with you, and thinking that perhaps a feverishness might lay hold upon your brain, made me a bed in the corner, with the determination of figuring and watching you, but weariness overcame me, and I fell asleep, nor woke till broad daylight.”

“I know not how to thank you. You have saved my life. Tell me something I can do ; you cannot realize my thankfulness.”

It is always hard for the generality of men to express themselves, when their deepest feeling is aroused ; their eyes do not overflow to relieve them, as do woman's, but a certain feeling of suffocation, a great pressure within, which only makes them more dumb, and creates powerlessness. This was Mr. Woods' case exactly ; he desired to express so much, that the few words he could utter, sounded like stray echoes in a cavern, and were at best, a withered leaf, compared with the full bloom of his soul's thankfulness.

Honest George appreciated this, and taking a wise advantage of the opportunity, drew forth the ever ready pledge.

“Mr. Woods, I ask no pay, save in one way.

You are a good, true man, one of nature's noblest, too valuable a mind to be lost ; live, be an ornament to society, and prove the strength in your good right hand, which is fit I verily believe to steer the ship of state, or lay hold on the lever of our national affairs," and his voice, tremulous with feeling, lowered. "Deacon, sign this pledge, I ask it as the only reward I crave."

Lashes fell over the brimming eyes of Mr. Woods ; George had struck a tender spot, and the tears which, in spite of everything must fall, melted the ice, unbound his feeling-shackled speech, and as he wiped them away, his loosened tongue spoke for him.

"Mr. Bean, I dare not sign that paper ; I cannot help it ; I speak from knowledge. Oh ! my God, my wife, oh ! world, oh ! all that knows and does not know me, would that I were able to. I am a victim, and I shall die, sink in my tracks, be frozen to death, or killed on the road ; that will be my fate, as inevitable as it is unjust."

"My dear brother say not so. You have a strong mind, and power to hold a tenable position."

"No, no, you do not understand me. I will tell you a secret, for to you I owe the debt of a life—see to it, it is kept ; forgive me sir, I know

by the light in your eyes, I am safe in confiding to you.

“My mother—she is in Heaven now—God bless her, my poor little weak mother, was frailest of the frail—she gave her life for mine, and for months previous to and after my birth, her life was despaired of. Stimulant, and only that, kept her alive, brought me into the world, and she lived one year to care for me, while I drank in daily the poison with which my food was filled. Yes, from the breast of my mother drank the slow poison which filled me with its life, and, Mr. Bean, I love brandy and wine better than anything. I long for it continually, and in my earlier years, had no cognizance of its great power over me; did not know I was a slave; realized not the length and breadth of my enemy.

“Had I known more, I might have suffered less. My father had always taken his bitters, and up to the time of my first plea in court, I drank moderately. At that time I was fearful and of course somewhat nervous, and with an extra draught of liquor, stilled my nerves and gave them also the strength necessary. My plea was successfully made, and in less than a year, with the repetition of extra stimulation, I came to a place where a passage through hell was inevitable, and experi-

enced a month of dissipation. When I came to my senses, and found my wife nearly killed from sorrow, I swore vengeance against myself, broke every bottle in the house that had held liquor, and made a solemn vow to my God and her, never again to do this; but after a time of abstinence, which required not only moral courage, but all the physical strength I could muster, I succumbed to the pressure, and satiated the intolerable cravings of my stomach. It is now ten years since then, and in that time six months has been the extent of endurance against appetite. These periods of abstinence have been wholly free from all wines, ales, or liquors, and each time I have fallen, it seems to me I have gone deeper in degradation.

Long ago I put my property out of my hands, else I should be a poor man, and I hope, yes, I pray, Mr. Bean, if this must continue, that I may in some other way, be taken out of the world, from this besetting sin.

It is a disease which none understand. There should be institutions in our land governed by men who have been resurrected from this living grave, if such there be, where poor victims, like myself, can be treated for their malady. No one has ever yet reached the root of this crying evil,

and the condemnation which drunkards receive, is in nine cases out of every ten, unjust and cruel. I have been filled for a long time with my own rendering of this condition, its cause and cure, and have longed to make known my earnest conviction regarding the matter, and had it not been for the terrible surety within, of falling myself, should have given my time to lecturing upon it, so goaded I have been with thought, but with the fact of my own recurring weakness, I could venture no advice to others. If I could cure myself, I might be of assistance to them."

"Try once more, it may be you will succeed."

"I do try constantly, and, as I tell you, fall. It is my fate."

"Brother, sign this pledge at my request. It certainly cannot hurry your steps forward to ruin."

"No, no, I wish I could. You do not know what you ask. The signing of my name there is equivalent to an oath. I will not take a false one."

"A lawyer at that—you surprise me," and George smiled.

"I will tell you what I will do; I will try, as I have before, meanwhile I keep you for my best friend in this matter. When I feel again the ta

rantula within me fastening itself to poison my life, I shall come to you, or you shall come to me, and it may be you will prove a needed physician. If I can keep sober one year, I shall feel almost sure of myself; then I will sign your pledge and circulate it."

"Amen," said George; "I will follow you day and night, if I can be of any service."

There was a strangely written leaf in the history of Apple Rest, at which all marvelled, and none more than Mrs. Chubbuck, who said:

"George is like a drawin' plaster, everybody that gets lame, halt, blind, or drunk, especially drunk, comes to him." What will happen next?"

CHAPTER XVII.

SIMEON was intent on becoming informed regarding that of which he had known so little, and pursued faithfully his studies in grammar, geography and arithmetic, making more rapid progress than George dreamed of, which delighted him greatly.

It was a new world to Simeon, and every day a revelation to his spirit; laws which were to him before a dead letter, warmed with life, as he grew to search for that which existed, and with his palpitating zeal, proved the same old truth, welcome through ages to the hearts of men, "Knock and ye shall find, ask and ye shall receive." How true it is, he thought, "the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." It is true of all that concerns man temporally and spiritually; his soul sang constantly, the hymn of praise which his daily practice made perfect, and truly and religiously he went forward doing whatever his hand found to do, with all his might.

The robins came this year as before, and, singing in the old trees, were heard and understood, as from their throats came now a glad refrain,

and "Simeon, oh! Simeon," rose with approving, instead of reproving accent.

Belinda smiled and worked the long day through, and was always at the gate to meet him, when the evening and his return from labor came.

"Help at the proper moment saved him," said George, and Hyde may well be proud of her self-poised, active and intelligent citizen, who will live to take a senatorial chair, and more than this, be able to fill it, and be something more than a figure-head. If temperance men will work, and apply the necessary detergents to purify and preserve the principle of their fellow beings, (and in doing this help also themselves,) there is no reason why their work shall not be what it ought to be, and receive the approval of a beneficent Father, and thanks of an intelligent people."

"Simeon shall be a great and useful man." What a true prophet George was, and when in after years the 'Lieutenant,' with his wife and a dear little girl, sojourned in the city where he served in an official capacity, some who heard the prediction remembered and referred to it, and to his credit let it be said he never forgot the day of small things, neither the night of his peril, and the hand stretched forth to save. In Simeon, George Bean had a true and lasting friend. Ye

shall not ask bread and receive a stone, neither fish and be given a serpent, and blessed was George, though persecuted and reviled, and falsely spoken of, for the sake of obedience to the law of Christ, which is more than all other laws, and the only road through which we may walk to the path of everlasting peace.

The meetings of the Blue Ribbon Lodge grew in interest. It was an ever open door for ventilation of thought, and improved by those of the Lodge who dared to risk speech making.

George was nearly always ready. Sometimes the long look ahead which he took, leaping over years to stand at the side of his precious truth, whose proportions to him were clearly defined, and stood in bold relief on the horizon of mentality, operated upon him strangely; he saw more than the rest, looked with the soul of prescience, whose eyes ignored the barriers which held their places in the way of others; his thoughts had wings, while those of his neighbors were only pin feathers. Of course they could not fly, but now and then George lost patience, and unable to measure himself and others also, bore down upon the customs of society, stormed away at the slow crawling of their ideas, and almost denounced his best friends; he lost himself, and cried out with

bitterness and discouragement, infinite disgust and impatience ; he could not wait the slow and faltering movements, and above all he feared the lack of moral courage. "I tell you," he would say, "you are afraid, and of whom ? Not of God, but man, when your position should be such as to receive the smiles of your God, with no reference to the judgment which a human being may mete out to you. Fear is the handmaid of error, and is not the child of eternity ; fear must die, but truth and love will live forever, and what do we want of perishable things ; only so far as our temporal beings are concerned, should they enter into our consideration, but there cease, since our immortal souls can take to another world only the things which endure forever."

George was right so far as his Philology, but unacquainted with himself and the individual conditions governing him. With a brain whose equal was not found in Hyde ; the natural ability of which he was increasing by constant study ; the perception of all things relating to the intellectual and moral needs of the world ; he did not know that in his wonderfully clear reading he was running away from the common and central thoroughfares of life and thought.

He had builded a turnpike of his own and did not realize it.

“If he could be a little more like the rest of us,” said Mrs Chubbuck, “he’d get along with less fuss, but he can’t; he’s jest exactly his own pattern, and nothin’ else. The essence of oddity from every identical hair on his head to his toe nails, odd as Dick, with his hat band half way round and tucked under.”

Even Rachel, who was as much an original character as he, and more, for, being a woman, her eccentricity seemed more palpable, could readily see, what he ought and might gain; also, what he could, and probably would lose. Many times she gave him advice, never charged him anything for it; liked to do it; her words running as freely and easily as water down an inclined plane.

“George, mi’ dear, black your boots, get a bit o’ new clothes, stop mussin’ up your hair, an’ sprig up a bit; then ye can go down to the city, an’ seat yourself among the quoloty folks; them as wayn’t listen to the best o’ words, if they doesn’t come frae a silver horn, wi’ all ye knaäws it’ll be betther for ye, George, nor stayin’ here; an’ then doesn’t ye know as all the best men i’ the land waänts to be well ready for days as is to be?

“Yaänkees isn’t so smaärt as they waäyn’t

hae trouble, naw I say, George, the days'll bring ye trouble. Powder'll be smelled agin' an' it's then I'se to hie to ould Hingland, aye, an' the gells wi' me.

“Upon what features in the nation's economy do you predicate so serious a time?”

“I knaäw naäw't o' the economy, as ye call it, but the managin' is wrong and shiftless; folks wi' prosperin' gets lazy, an' shirks the work for both bodies an' souls, an' is willin' to do naw't as they caän't help. I tell ye, George, the auld ship o' staäte'll run agin' a rock while time, too great thinkin' ye knaäws it, an' too little knaäwin' an' doin, maäkes marks after a bit, an' its daddlin' along ye'll be, this waay an tother, an' all in a minit, it'll seem, when it comes, ye'll hear the graäte noise o' a nation's fury, an' there'll be war, afore its settled, I'se sure, I knaäws it.

“You claim to be a true prophet.”

“Naw, I claims to hae a bit o' sense an' makes the colors o' the days to be, frae that as I find to-daäy; it takes no prophet to see it; read the papers a week, an' put this an' that together. An', George, every mon as is a mon counts one, that'll do to set agin a hundred, o' the foolish fellers, an' you should be one o' the big toads at puddle; one as'll hop clear over the big gäap in the

Staätes. Many a poor boy 'll lose his life ; many a mother an' wife 'll mourn the graäte trouble, an' the poor childer 'll die ; them as was raised tender and sweet 'll die on the hard an' cruel ground, an' all because ye haäin't sense, to stop the marchin' on o' ignorance. It's all because ye knaäws nowt. I tells ye to dress up, mi' dear ; it'll do ye no hurt to look a bit betther."

"Oh, my dear sister, clothes are not what a nation wants, that will make no difference."

"Aye, but it will, mi' dear, there's nobody like ye, George, an' it's only right ye should do a bit as the rest wants ye. It's not only dollars as'll come to your pocket, but the power as ye'll gain, o' makin' great help. Few that's fitted to do what ye can do ; an' there it is there's a graänd chair for ye to set in."

"Ah ! my dear sister, your logic is not sound. True merit ignores any attempt at diplomacy, and who has the right to dictate to me regarding my clothes ? If they desire my service, the old coat is as good as the new."

"Ah ! ye doesn't knaäw your own self."

"Let me suggest the possibility of your needing some of these new fangled arrangements to help you perform your part. You came among us, clothed in a primitive and sensible way, and

thus far you have adhered to the style you brought. It might be wisdom for you to adopt some foolish fashion, in hope of being better able to make good syrups for people ;” and George smiled.

“That’s a difference, George ; I’s e but a small woman, come to sit at the woods in a bit o’ a home an’ gie to the folks the help, as I can, which is all I can do ; nayture, as made me born for settin’ bones, an’ doctorin’ a bit, made me never to preach an’ make laws, like yourself. No, I doesn’t need a chaänge, an’ more nor that, I’d never hamper miself wi’ ’long dress, an’ all the fixins o’ quoloty ladies ; wi’ braided hair an’ graäte long locks smackit down to mi’ forehead, as ud make me crawl ; I has betther sense.”

“Amen, so have I. We agree exactly.”

“Aye, but ye needs different things to wear, nor ye gets ; ye knaäw well ye could never go to the Congress wi’ the britches up most to the knees. I wears better lookin’ shoes nor yours, George,” and she raised her stout boots for inspection, that he might be convinced.

“You will do better making herb drinks than converting me into a fop ;” and with an idea in his mind, like a small thorn in his side, he departed, talking to himself as he walked along. He was not blind to the necessity, in part, of obey-

ance to conventionalities; he was never pleased with a coarse, ill-bred person, had great respect for water, and deemed purity of the body a necessary part of life, and yet had no thought of or care for clothing, farther than comfortable, loose fitting garments, and coats with an extra supply of huge pockets, and in his soul he knew, when he thought upon the matter, that he would never, could never follow in the wake of even those who, making no manifestations of foppishness, are simply, plainly dressed gentlemen. He did not exactly like himself in all these ways, and sometimes really wished he was more like others, but these seasons of reflection carried him always to the same conclusion.

“I cannot be held; I must be myself or nothing, and if I risk all, risk it I must.” Years, as they grew, only carried him farther out to sea, and in place of decreasing the oddities which composed his eccentric make up, were as colors shading deeper daily; the touches of a master hand, which defined more closely the expression of its subject.

Apple Rest was rife with sweetness; bough after bough of blushing blossoms hung from the trees, and in all the beauty of bloom, a strangely quiet wedding occurred.

It was over at Squire Loomis', in the large best room, with Violet and Jed. in the foreground, and moist eyes to right of them ; moist eyes to left of them ; Millie Dean's the reddest of them all ; she not shedding a few quiet tears, but just crying harder and harder, from before the service until long afterward. Cried till she could not stop, until Mrs. Chubbuck was alarmed ; Violet nearly frantic and Jed. quite out of patience, that his sweet bride should be so rained upon.

Only the chosen few were there ; Rachel was one of the chosen, but refused to go, saying,

“No, no, nor I waäyn't go to the funeral ; oh Vielit ! sweet Vielit ? beautiful flower ; God keep thee, darlin'.”

George behaved extraordinarily well on this occasion, and had an extra compliment. “I never see you behave so well,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, two days after the wedding ; but, good land, how Millie did carry on ; she would have cried till now if her body hadn't give right out, and let her faint clear away. She says, she shudders when she thinks of it, and she felt as if it was the dreadfullest thing that ever happened. I hope it's all right ; it looks so. Janey's fiddlin' was kinder solemn, too ; it sounded as if some of the birds was sick and cryin' kinder weak like, for the old

bird to come. What an idee that child has ; she calls her fiddle her box of birds, and since she has seen our birds here, she is crazy to be out fiddlin', and hearin' the birds sing in the trees, the whole time."

"She is a unique specimen of natural love and simplicity ; but I fear I shall never teach her that three times four are twelve. She is quick enough to perceive, and tries hard, but gains very slowly ; her mind appears as if pre-occupied continually."

"I wish I didn't feel so, George ; I miss Vilit so, I can't tell what to do with myself. If Squire Loomis and his wife were not alone, I wouldn't consent to her goin' there to stay ; she's my girl, and if Millie wasn't with me, I couldn't nor wouldn't let her go. Mercy ! it seems a month now since she was married."

Violet was very well satisfied with her new home. The power of adaptibility rendered her compatible with every one, nearly, and considering the good, motherly-soul Mrs. Loomis possessed, it was no wonder that, in addressing her, "Mother," fell in silvery accents. It never occurred to Violet, that she was dispossessing her whose face lay under the grasses, for she never lost sight of her love ; and so many times a day, she thought of little things to say to her ; and mother

in heaven, mother and Aunt Charity, were three names dear, and growing dearer always. Millie Dean would cry her eyes out, to be forgotten, and then there was George, oh ! yes, Violet had numbers of dear friends, but these three were the pillars against which she leaned ; advice she never refused, and naturally possessed of much approbation, was not fully satisfied, unless those who were nearest approved of her movements. The very fact of Rachel's absence from the wedding grieved her, and she was not easy on that point, until Rachel had declared, positively, " weddins was sad happenins ;" hardly quieted even by this, still, with her new comforter, whose daily love and presence was the dew that woke into life her sweetest flowers, moistening their leaves and roots, and filling the days with their bouquets, whose beauty rivalled any she had culled alone ; her heart was full of gladness, and Squire Loomis' whole house was redolent with the baptism of her innocent and fragrant presence. No daughter had graced their home with a needed presence, and the chair which had waited through the years, was filled. They were as happy as the two children, and away down in the mother-heart, a hope sprang up like a promise trailing green. It would be better for Jed. ; he would find home more attractive,

Marigolds clustered, not only down at Simeon's, but the very self-same flowers were over at Hardy's Oven. How wonderfully strange it is that brown, dark earth where never a flower, except a few wild violets, had ever dreamed of living, smiled right up into the faces of Ruth and Janey, who coaxed their father to break the ground for two rows, whose beginning and ending were the gate and the door, and center, the walk between.

Hollyhocks, not those which have come to us since this score and a-half ago of years, that look, in their white and cream-like beauty, large, double pinks done in wax, but just plain, single ones; then, running around among the tall hollyhocks, and broad-faced sun-flowers, there were ruddy-cheeked nasturtions; the little velvet marigolds, ladies' slippers, suited to the colors of the rainbow, some straight-backed, stout-breaded cardinal plumes that grew so proud and velvety, their names were cocks-combs, and just as the flowers thought of stopping to pay obeisance to the door-stone, some lazy four o'clocks looked up at you in the afternoon, and said, "what's the hurry? Afternoon is time enough to blossom."

"Robins, birds and sweet posies make up Heaven," said Janey. "We'se all in the best place we could get."

Free as the birds, the woods and the birds, and the violin and the beautiful flowers, filled full her every day.

No more romantic spot than Hardy's Oven ; no Gypsy to grace it prettier than laughing Janey, who, nimble as the squirrels whose homes she knew so well, dodged in and out of house and wood, through the long days of summer. Her talk was filled with strange sayings about the birds, and such wonderful acquaintances she made, that quoloty Nancy sneeringly said :

“You get such a habit of story-telling, you'll believe your own made-up nonsense yet ; who thinks the birds come and sit on your fiddle, and gather all about you ? I do not.”

“Nancy,” and the dark eyes looked like a consuming fire, “I tells naw lies ; some day ye'll knaäw,” and she turned from her sister as one who was deeply wronged.

Nancy should have posted herself, before rendering so ungraceful a verdict, and if she could only have happened near the oven a few days after that fatal speech, she might have been as surprised as the artist who, coming from the city with his sketch book, partly scented out the place, and reassured by the sight of its oven-chimney, came leisurely toward it ; and paused within twenty feet

of the oven, his gaze falling on the picture which had arisen before him as unconsciously as it was born. The tyro in art was as fixed as the tree against which he leaned, daring not to move lest he should break the spell, by revealing his identity to the nymph of the forest.

Janey sat perched on the broad, flat stone top of the oven proper, her back resting against the chimney, her attitude as graceful as it was defiant, and the first sight caused the young man to wonder how she dropped so perfectly into position. In her hand the dear, old friend whose music she was invoking, and strangest of all, birds of many a kind were all about her, listening apparently, to her entrancing music. One little robin sat among the thick, short curls, and looked down over her forehead, on to the hand that held the bow, a brown thrasher perched on her shoulder; the third, whose dark, red wings contrasted with a golden breast, at the neck of her violin, the tremor of the instrument not in the least disturbing, and about her on every side, covering the oven, and adding the height of a songster to the chimney's top, were birds. The sight was a novel one and most interesting, and when, for a few moments, she ceased playing and spoke to her feathered companions, whom she addressed as a whole

by her own unique title, "New east robins," wings fluttered, little feet grew restless, and two or three bolder than the rest, began to sing their love, but at a wave of her hand every motion was stilled, and again she played.

Fortune favored the timorous observer, for he straightway seated himself, and rudely sketched the outlines of the picture. Never in all his life had he seen anything so naturally, surprisingly beautiful, and being unobserved it was a rare chance, an opportune experience though, in his new-born zeal, he never dreamed Janey's inspiration would lend a charm to his untutored hand, and waken within, the fire which caused him afterwards, to lay in finest colors a reproduction of the scene. Janey made a fortune for an unknown fellow-being, and threw among the pages of history, a picture which told all about herself, an ineffaceable recollection of Hardy's Oven.

When tired of playing she carefully laid her violin in its box, and with "Come ye new east robins," jumped to the ground, and ran as if pursued, the flock of birds following her, making a shadow in her wake, and then forming in line beside her, with playful flying hither and thither, and from their throats issued sweet music. Apparently well

acquainted with Janey, and all her movements, they were having a frolic together.

The one observer, was anxiously planning a mode of introduction to Janey, for he desired to see more of her; must get acquainted that he might be able to successfully carry out the design with which she had inspired him, and noticing that she did not fail to cast watchful glances on her violin, he bethought himself to take a position near it, and hastened to do so. The first turn Janey took, she espied him, and ran to the rescue of her treasure, whose safety was comparatively risked; gathering it close to her, she turned to face the stranger, who was leaning against the oven, with a strange look in her eye, half curious, half fearful; she looked straight in his face, and his pleasant tone reassured her, as he asked:

“Are you fond of the woods and the birds?”

“I loves the trees, and the new east robins is beautiful. I has a big cletch o’ birds.”

“Why do you call them new east robins?”

“Just because they is new east robins. Janey never seed robins at west.”

“Do you come from the west?”

“Aye, frae Michigan.”

“See here,” and he showed her the rude sketch.

“Oh! birds, birds, birds, an’ Janey, an’ fiddle, an’ all; how did ye do it?”

“I saw you sitting here, and watched you as you played. I would like to come again and hear you, so that I may make a large, beautiful picture.”

“Will I put on the new pink frock for ye?” and she looked honestly into his face.

“Oh! no. I like the picture to look natural, and just as you do every day. Wear the same dress; but tell me, Janey, can you call the birds?”

“Aye, I calls the birds wi’ fiddle, an’ the whistle frae mi throat. When will ye come again?”

“To-morrow, if pleasant; can you give me a drink of water?”

“Aye, I can; come wi’ me to the house and see the sisters.”

CHAPTER XVIII.

THERE comes George all in a fluster, something extra on hand," and Mrs. Chubbuck wiped her hands on the clean roller, and stood waiting his entrance.

"Here I am, and I am in town, and deem it sapient to make as rapid progress in arranging myself for a trip to the city, as is possible."

"What's the matter?"

"I have a letter from Deacon Woods, who desires me to come at once, to do some work for the Custom House."

"What on earth can you do in a Custom House? I don't know what kind of a place it is, anyway."

"It is a legitimate arm of the Government, my dear sister, and prevents the people from cheating the nation. The building where customs and duties are paid; where vessels are entered, or obtain their clearance papers."

"Yes, I understand it now; its as clear as a board fence; but never mind; what can you do there?"

"I have been designated by the Deacon, as a competent person to engage for purpose of measuring the vessels in the harbor, ascertain their ton-

nage, that is to say, how many tons each vessel can carry."

"That's an awful job, I should say. You'll have to fill the boats full, and then measure it out by the bushel. You'll tire yourself out; I wouldn't go."

"No, no, my dear sister, your primitive method is not my guide. I compute the tonnage by measuring the dimensions of the vessel."

"Oh!" and a light dawned upon the darkness; "well, what can I do for you?"

"I must take a clean shirt, and a dickey, I suppose, for he writes that my services may be required during one month. Eben will come over and milk while I am away."

"Foolish Eben!" said Millie, "what can we do with him?"

"He is teachable, especially so with sister Chubbuck, for whom he entertains a high regard; but Jed. would come over, I presume; perhaps I ought to intrust you to his care."

"No, no, never mind that, we're all right, and if we get lonesome, we'll send for Janey and her fiddle; you get yourself ready. I'll brush your clothes, and for pity's sake do try to keep lookin' a little decent. You aint a goin' to wear that big white hat, be you? your other one looks enough

better. I wish I'd burnt it up, so you never could find it."

"Ah! my dear sister, this white hat is invaluable to me. I would not exchange it for a dozen of your new fangled ones. Of course I shall wear it."

"You aint really a goin' to, are you?"

"Certainly I am," and as he departed Mrs. Chubbuck looked regretfully after him, musing aloud upon his oddity."

"He'll wear that hat a hundred years, if he don't lose it; it just caps the climax. Why didn't I burn it up?"

"Up at Hardy's Oven, over at Squire Loomis', down at Apple Rest, and at Simeon's, George was terribly missed. The evening schools were, of course, abandoned, and the summer vacation brooding over all, made schoolhouse-hill a lovely untenanted spot. Rachel declared it was like having everybody dead, and just at this particular time she needed him more than ever. She went down to Apple Rest to free her mind, and shed some tears, and if the worthy teacher had been there he might have comforted her, while Mrs. Chubbuck and Millie could only give their sympathy minus advice. They knew the moment she entered, something annoyed her.

“Set down, Rachel; what makes you so down in the mouth? You look as blue as a whetstone.”

“I’se in trouble, mother Charity; solid trouble as I never waänted to hae come to me, oh! dear! dear! an’ its quoloty Nancy all day, an’ quoloty Nancy in mi dreams; what’ll I do wi’ the gell, is more nor I knaäws.”

“Is she sick?”

“Sick? naw, but as well an’ as brisk as a flounderin’ fish, an’ as thorny as the thorn tree itself. She turns not around wi’out hurtin’ some o’ us, an’ Ruthy’s gotten tired on her; John does nawt but growl, an’ Janey cries her eyes red atween her frolics—quoloty Nancy, the gell as gies us all such trouble.”

“What can be the matter? do tell me.”

“Matters enough to kill the heaärt o’ her poor mother an’ all, an’ howiver I does, there’s nawt’ll suit mi’ lass; she’s on the high roaäd, is Nancy, an’ fuller o’ pride nor eggs wi’ meat. A gell as belongs to a queen couldn’t hae more o’ high head nor she, an’ what’ll we do? John ‘Ardy says as it’s me is to fix it all, fur he tells me, as I waäynt be satisfied wi’out the waäy I thinks is best, an’ it’s true; I doesn’t try to get awaäy frae truth, yet I sees naw waäy fur the proud gell as waänts to be fine.

It's to go to boardin' school, to go to the city, an' get in wi' the track o' the lasses there, an' why caänt this gell be satisfied like Janey an' Ruth, an' wi' George to teach her, who knaäws more nor all the rest; I saäy, she should be well pleased to staäy at Ardy's Hoven, an' what can I do wi' her. Its neither preachin' or laäshin' as maäkes the mind suited, and then there's the dollars, she knaäws well as she can goa, fur we hae plenty o' dollars, an' she blaämes, an' cries, an' tells me as how did I love her, I'd clap both hands to see her go, an' be laärn't in a lady's school. I can do nowt; bitters to make I has fur ould corn cobby Deekin's wife, an' I knaäws nowt, does nowt, an' all fur quoloty Nancy, the poor foolish gell as owt hae more sense, aye, an' has gotten more nor she uses, an' that only makes it worse; oh! dear, dear!" and Rachel cried aloud, weaving her body to and fro in her strange fashion.

Mrs. Chubbuck hardly knew what to say; still she must try to do something to comfort the poor woman who had fought against this turn in the tide until nearly worn out. It was very evident that Nancy would carry the day, for her mother had only one oar left, and in her distress, weakness would compel her to drop that; policy and wisdom both were consulted, and at last a gate

opened into the road of the present necessity, and Mrs. Chubbuck passed through.

“See here, Rachel,” and she stirred anew the fire, setting over the kettle for tea; “now it seems to me you don’t need to feel quite so bad about Nancy. I’ve always said she was an uncommon smart girl; I know she is different from your blessed, motherly Ruth, but that ain’t anything strange.”

“Naw, she was discontented frae birth, an’ before too.”

“We must not blame her too much; I think it very natural for her to want to go away and see a little more of the world than she gets here among the hills. It ’ll be a little different from bein’ in a house of her own, where she has a right to frown or smile, jest as she pleases. I wouldn’t wonder if it’d do her good. I guess it’ll come to you just what to do; I don’t feel able to advise you strong, one way or another, only, one thing I do know, when we get to the end of one lane another one opens. ‘A long road that has no turn.’ Now, we’ll have some supper, and you get quiet, you ’ll be sick next you know.”

Millie ventured to suggest that George, being in the city, might find a suitable school, adding, “I will write to him about it if you desire.”

“Aye Millie, do mi’ dear ; I guesses I’ll let her go,” and before the cheerful tea was over, Rachel’s face was quite changed, so much so, that when her husband came, he greeted her with, “Ye look brightened up owd ’ooman, an’ ye beant sewer as ye’ll die.”

“Naw, I’se not to die, and I say, John Ardy, we’se to let the gell go to the city.”

“Arter ye’se cried an’ cried, an’ made yersel’ sick, she’ll hae ’er oan way to ersen. I thowt ye’d let her goa, an’ the botherin’ fuss, has tired ye howt, an’ it’s pity ye niver not coom over afore.”

“Keep still, John Ardy ; settle yoursel’ fur a cup o’ hot tea, an’ stop the scaäldin’. I’se suffered, aye, I’se sick.”

He smiled good naturedly, and seated himself for the “cup o’ tea, and bit o’ bread,” which was all he said he wanted.

The stalwart settler carried with him a strong feeling of well-applied content, and his giant frame held a good heart ; one whose warmth of feeling you felt, whenever he came near ; just the man to keep every fence about his farm in good order, to make the best use of all his land, and produce all that could be raised from every inch of ground. Looking, not with restless, uneasy vision, out into the future days, he made the best

of all within his reach, neglecting nothing, and forever well-doing, the contented and faithful worker received a daily benediction. John Hardy was at constant peace with himself, his family and friends.

George received Millie's letter, and replied in due season; he had to send a wail of regret for Nancy's choice, which Millie smothered without giving it a chance to reach the ears of Rachel, but announced the fact of having found a pleasantly situated school, with tractable and amiable teachers—two maiden sisters. The terms he considered high, but they were nevertheless approved, and George delegated to arrange for Nancy, and Hardy's Oven was filled with the smiles of the delighted girl. Her mother acceded to every wish except one, and there she stepped clear out of reach, on to the scaffolding of better sense, crying down from overhead.

“Naw, I'll not get a black silk dress fur ye; the next 'll be diminds an' precious stones; ye'se born fur summat else than to be bedizened out, an' I waäyn't get no silk.”

“I can wait,” was the pert reply, “but a silk dress I'll have.”

“Oh!” said Ruth; “child, how can you talk so? Do be thankful! I fear we may, some day,

have less, if we grow to be thankless girls. Never say such words again," whereat, Nancy fell to crying and bemoaning the lack of love. What a pity the cloud must have arisen ! The sky ought to have kept all clear to the day of her departure, but her tornadoic wrath was always at hand.

There was much to be done ; many stitches for Ruth to take, though Nancy helped considerably on her clothes, and knit yards of lace from linen thread. Violet gave her the pattern, and Ruth really wished it had been skillfully manipulated by time and decay, ere she had seen it, for with the care lavished on taste, too much time was consumed, still she said nothing, but sewed right on, improving all the time she could get ; rising early, and going to bed late. The best dress was one of pure white lawn of linen fiber, and as for linen, Nancy boasted more, than thirty years after date, could be found, save in the wealthiest families, for cotton threads were few in her wardrobe, and how beautifully made all her garments were ; faggot-edged ruffles were many, and every bit of gathering was two and four, taking two threads and leaving four. Why, the Queen herself, would ask for no nicer clothes than those, which were whiter than snow, and as smooth as hot irons deftly handled could make them. The dresses were five in num-

ber, and that was a great many Janey thought, and from the pink calico to the linen lawn, with its visite to match, trimmed with a quilled ruffle of the same, edged with narrow linen lace, all was complete and perfectly suited to her. Ruth was proud of her sister's fair complexion, and the white neck and arms, which gleamed like marble, were admirably set off by the low necks and short sleeves, which were to Janey new east notions.

George was doing well for himself, in the city. His advent created a ripple of excitement among those he met. That white hat would have been annihilated, had mother Charity been with him.

He would have found himself hatless upon the first morning after his arrival ; but what did George care ? Why, he hardly heard the voices of those ragged, dirty-faced urchins, who had just come up Topsy-like, and when his friend Woods, stopping suddenly, brandished his cane as if it were a bowie knife, and shouted, "Look out there, no more of that !" he had to inquire the trouble.

"Why, where are you, Professor ? It is your white hat that makes all the rumpus. Those boys have followed us for three blocks, and the nearer we get to the dock, the worse it will be."

"Oh ! is that all ? Well, let me see, ah ! I see —no—I have lost the thread of my thought, in

thinking of those foolish boys, and the fact of my hat eliciting unrelishable remarks, and those which issue only from rudely, ignorant minds, reminds me that it has been through time true, that any deviation from a generally accepted course, is regarded as an almost heinous crime. The man who first carried an umbrella, was a Londoner, and subjected in that city, through whose streets he walked, to the cries, not only of the boys, but men and women added their sneers, and it was three years before another person dared to risk a parachute."

"Is that true?" said Lawyer Woods; "if I have read it, it is forgotten."

"Not only true but a simple and pertinent fact, one which gives us the key note to the irregular manifestations of men; the cause of unjust attacks upon all sides, for to wear a hat of a different color, or have a new thought which is eminently fitted to assist in our salvation, is to open the door for an assault. No thought is exercised, reason ignored, and men of all degrees rush blindly forward to throw dirt into the eyes of the innocent victims. How long, oh! Lord, how long?"

"Sure enough, Professor; I have thought of nearly the same things many times. It is a fact, that in the different pursuits of life, where the

track has been surveyed, if not entirely made ready for our feet by our fathers, we walk along in a prescribed way, forgetting to question if there be other and better ways for us. The fact is, we lose the freshness of innocence soon after we merge from boyhood, and learn to consider no friendship in trade, which has the effect of blunting our sensibilities, and while we may skim over the ocean of life, and be called by the world responsible men, there is, after all, no real satisfaction in our hearts like that which might arise, no feeling of innate thankfulness for our having been born, and, I am sorry to confess it, but in my heart arises no pleasure at the thought of leaving this earth ; it is hard work for me to believe there is anything beyond."

A shudder passed over George, as he replied earnestly :

"Oh ! my dear brother, do not entertain so hard a belief. It is an insult to the Father of us all, for if there is no better condition than that which belongs to the flesh-environed souls of men, we are of all creatures most miserable, and our few years of contaminated misery render no reward to either God or his children. We know that we are not the creatures of chance ; as for me, the construction of the human frame, with its multiplic-

ity of muscles and bones, and the miles of nerves that traverse the system, is positive proof of a deific life, of which we are the product ; therefore, I reason in this wise, that the frame which only holds an animate spirit, is simply made and given to us as a means of expression, whose greatest utility is in its ability to help us to the concentration of thought and knowledge, which, instead of dying when the book is worn out, leaves an ineffaceable record on the chart of the soul. I look upon this state as a preparatory one, and feel that it is highly incumbent upon every child of the sod, to realize this truth, 'Ye are the temples for the living God to dwell in.' I do not entertain even a suspicion of blackened souls. I believe that the spark of eternal love within us, is sufficiently recognizable to declare our kinship with the soul of things, and every day reveals more and more of the blunders which arise from misapprehension regarding ourselves and our neighbors.


"The mountains are old, but thought is forever new, and here, to-day, we must go the other side of the flood, to begin the gathering to ourselves of that which we hungering cry for day and night. Oh ! for the uncovering of the souls within us, for the baptism which shall entirely remove the filth which has gathered and congealed a hardened

crust, that out from the debris of the present the souls of men shall stand in their pristine purity. God speed the time when the name of man shall be a synonym of all that is eternal and true!"

"You are a real, live preacher, Professor; I fear the pulpit, and not the field, is your proper place."

"Oh! no, I must be a laborer in the vineyard, and mix regularly these good thoughts with all the work I do—honest work and thought go naturally together, and shading his eyes with his hands, George looked out over the harbor.

CHAPTER XIX.

ERE to-day and there to-morrow.”

Millie Dean was reading with pleasure a letter announcing the arrival of George. The month had been a long one, and the fearless exponent of right, would be most welcome, his letter was a breath from his very soul ; his reception by his new made and earnest friend Mr. Woods, and the apparent confidence in him which through the courtesy of city officials had been made manifest, made his month of hard labor (for no matter how much help was given him he invariably did the work himself) a pleasant pastime and more than this, he saw much prospective work, and was already engaged to survey for a breakwater. His object in writing the letter was indicative of the man, for after delivering himself as regarded his stay entering into a graphic description of the most amiable hostess, whose kindly supervision of his needs had caused him to be grateful, he added, “Now to the great necessity which prompts the writing of this epistle. I desire to bring my friend Woods to home with me. He has experienced of late, some disagreeable appetitic admonitions, and if I

leave him to his fate, I shall neglect a duty, and lay myself open to a serious charge.

I cannot stay here, and if he can be with me, I have faith that by bearding the lion in its den, I may strike a death blow, to this menacing curse, and thereby help one of God's best men to remain inviolate ; he is tremulous with fear, and daring not to let his wife know of it, I propose to have him with me through this trial, and since his wife's sisters are here at present, it will be an opportune moment for rescue.

“If you, Mrs. Chubbuck, are nervous about it, I am sure Simeon will help us through. I have had a long and earnest consultation with the family physician, and obtaining from him remedies for an emergency, feel there is no cause for great alarm, since the man is really in earnest, and depending on me for help in the hour of peril.

“Unless I hear to the contrary, we shall present ourselves two days hence,” and Millie looked to her listener for an answer.

A long drawn sigh, and only one escaped her, and then the pleasant determination which always came into her face with the birth of conviction, settled like a calm on the surface of the troubled waters. It was oil in the hand of reason, and with

a faltering but a clear and steady voice her words came.

“Wall, spose its best to let him come, and I don’t feel scart a bit about it, but George’ll have more’n his share to tend to, there’s a good deal of backslidin’ goin’ on in Hyde, I reckon, and only yesterday Rayne told me George better come home and look out for the stray sheep. I looked him right in the eye, and said to him in a voice of Christian earnestness, “Satan is allus on hand, but thank the Lord he don’t get me to help him tempt the poor weakly brothers; we can’t be too careful about that, nor give ’em too much help;” he dropped his eyes, and the half snicker he had well started, slunk back into his throat; he knew what I meant. We must let Mr. Woods come, and give him the best room. I used to hate to have genteel city folks around, but I’ve got all over that, we are richer with vegetables and fresh eggs and milk and good butter on hand, than the biggest land owner in the city.”

“I expected you would say so, Mrs. Chubbuck. It makes me nervous; what if he should have the tremens, oh! my, I can hardly bear to think of it.”

Apprehensive Millie had a horror of these dire extremities to which in their great suffering men are carried, and never in all her life had she ex-

perienced any trouble from old king Alcohol. She thought about going over to stay with Violet, but checked herself with, "Millie Dean, you ungrateful girl, you know you would not go and leave mother Charity." No, of couse she would not, and it was Millie herself in her chintz dress and dainty ruffled apron, who stood on the verandah with Mrs. Chubbuck to welcome George and his friend.

Mr. Woods was a noble looking man, and his step was firm, his smile pleasant and his hand grasp, strong and friendly, as he greeted the occupants of Apple Rest. Surely this man cannot fall again, thought Millie; his eye is too bright, his will too strong, oh! no he cannot fall again. So thought Mrs. Chubbuck, and while these two hearts saw not the strength their good thoughts made, the current of their feelings nevertheless went warm and strong to the needful heart in their midst, and while it sang, this heart of a fellow being responded gratefully. Why it was just what he needed, they were not afraid of his downfall, and he would not disappoint them; no, the very thought strengthened him, and when Simeon came over, and with his manly presence awoke anew the story of his life which George had confidingly related, another link grew in the chain of support,

and with unfaltering faith, he went to his room to sleep and dream of a long, clear day of intellectual sunshine, waking refreshed and glad with the music of a new-born purpose in his soul, and in his ears the echo of the early song the blue bird sang so near his window, and as he looked out over the hills and into the clear blue sky, whose face had been touched with morning's rosy fingers, he said aloud, "Not until ye become as little children, can ye enter the kingdom of heaven." I am to be born again, Mary, my precious, blessed wife, can you hear me say it? I will write you a long letter to-day, and fill it with this sunshine, and his eyes grew lustrous in their humid beauty, as he turned to greet George who was ever at hand, always on duty.

"Good morning, Professor."

"Hurrah, here Deacon; are you speculating on the felicities of rurality?"

"I am indeed; I feel that I am about as near Heaven as I can get; I wish Mrs. Woods were here with me; I have half a mind to retire from business for a time. I believe I need a little rest, and such a place as this, is inspiring to thought. I might write some eligible campaign speeches against the time of need. Get them ready for the

fall election. I fear I shall be expected to talk a little."

That is a good idea; we will send for your wife, and have a real joyful time together; but sister Chubbuck says breakfast is waiting," and such breakfasts as these at Apple Rest, were always worth having; so thought George; so thought Mr. Woods; so thought everybody.

The old time "governor's chair," with its rush bottom and straight back, made of posts each side, which held the three inch slats between, waited on the pleasant verandah with an invitation to be seated, which Mr. Woods gratefully accepted after the meal. There he sat and wrote a long letter to his wife, ending with the promise to share with her a long and happy vacation in this country home, to which he obtained Mrs. Chubbuck's assent, and added a postscript to that effect. No tremor in his hand; no dry, feverish feeling in his throat; no terrible gnawing in his stomach; no, he never even thought of the secret fear which had spread its dark wings over him before he came, and the day went on, to the waiting night, peaceful and calm.

It was then, just about sunset, a little wonderment arose at George's non-return from Hardy's Oven, whither he went to call.

“He’s found some crow’s nest to tend to, I’ll warrant,” suggested Mrs. Chubbuck, and a moment after the “hoot-toot-toot-wheel,” of foolish Eben, sounded in the distance; he came in foaming haste, and Mrs. Chubbuck, who had learned to read him, knew there was trouble.

“What is it, Eben?” she cried.

“Hoot-toot-toot-wheel!”

“Oh! laws of mercy, yes; but now stop cuttin’ up, Eben, where is George; do you know?”

“Hoot-toot-toot-wheel, George, Abel, wh-e-ew,” and he looked in the direction of the road.

“Where be they, tell;” at which he seized her arm and fairly dragged her to the gate; she looked north, and, raising both hands, screamed in an agony of fear, “Millie! Mr. Woods! George! George!”

Mr. Woods and Millie gained the desired point simultaneously, and a second later, the double team of Squire Loomis, with Abel Bent and George, dashed past them, the horses running at full speed; they had evidently been running a distance, and their necks were circled in foam. George seemed endeavoring to stop them, and Abel, crazy with liquor, was rolling from side to side, swearing at George, and trying with all his might to get the reins. As they passed the gate, the latter

came near falling from the carriage, so vigorously Abel pushed him, and his hat falling off, he cried "look out for the papers," and on they shot; the road was straight, for a little distance ahead, and then came a sharp turn, bounded by two huge boulders: stakes driven by mother nature, which thus far were intact.

"Oh!" cried Mrs. Chubbuck, and "oh!" shuddered tearful Millie; "My God," said Mr. Woods, "he will be killed," and hatless and bonnetless, the three, with foolish Eben also, ran after them. Mrs. Chubbuck's lameness was better, but her limbs guaranteed no such pace as that which she took, looking eagerly at the turn in the road, feeling sure that both must be thrown out and killed.

"Oh!" rent the air, as it issued from the three throats, and against a boulder ran the carriage with such force as to lift it into the air, George and Abel tumbling out at separate sides, and the horses, maddened with fear, cleared themselves from the harness and ran on.

Both men lay for a moment stunned, and then George, recovering a little, made an effort to rise. It was a painful one; his left arm, which he outstretched in his fall, to save himself, was almost useless; the wrist being stubbed, and hand without feeling; his shoulder hurt him terribly;

he thought it was dislocated, and the gravel in his face and eyes, the blood streaming from his mouth, and a ghastly cut on the forehead, made him a sorrowful picture; but he smiled as his friends came up to him, and with their help gained his feet; his strength was not great, however, and he settled back on the ground, saying, I am not much hurt, look to Abel, he must have hit the big stone.

“Never mind him, George, tend to yourself.”

“Look to Abel,” he said; and they were forced to obey; finding him bruised and senseless; the sides of his head were badly cut; he was to all appearance seriously injured.

They raised him up, and Eben, who was not too foolish to be serviceable, and had run back to the house at the first sight of blood, returned with a pail of water, and an old tin dipper, which he found at the back door.

The water was just what was needed, and helped to bring poor Abel to a partial consciousness, and George, rinsing his mouth, discovered that three teeth were missing; he also, gaining strength, found that his shoulder was not broken, and was able to give Abel support, and with Mr. Woods at one side of the poor fellow and he at the other, they walked slowly toward the house, Mrs. Chub-

buck feeling all pity for George, and well provoked with Abel. Where the horses were no one knew, but foolish Eben understood that they wanted Squire Loomis to know about it, and with George's note of explanation tied about his neck, started off with his "hoot-toot-toot-whee," breaking the air of fast approaching night.

It was after dark before Abel was sufficiently recovered to go to his home, whither George insisted on accompanying him. Mr. Woods declared his intention of going, but George refused his company, fearing that he might have to stay all night.

"You ain't a goin' to stay there, with your cut head and lame shoulder, and half broken jaw; I should think you was crazy," said Mrs. Chubbuck.

"My dear sister, I fear if I leave him, he will start off on the wrong road."

Let him then; and here you've got this Mr. Woods here; what about him?"

"I shall ask Simeon to come over here."

"You ain't a goin' to stay there; you shan't do it; not if I have to send Millie over there with you."

"I am afraid to leave him."

"Wall, I don't care if you be. You are just

shook to pieces ; you must promise me to come back."

"I promise," he replied ; and as he passed through the gate, his good friend remarked,

"I'll bet a dollar he's got some notion into his head, he'll manage some way to have Abel watched. You might know anybody as drunk as he was never'd be killed. If George had been that side he'd have been picked up dead. I'm afraid he's worse hurt than he thinks."

"This man is one whom Mr. Bean has rescued is he?" asked Mr. Woods.

"Yes, he's fished him out of deep water, forty times over. I don't know how many times he has signed the pledge, in the last ten months, and George sticks to him, and a lot more of 'em, that can't keep their word ; no such thing as their doin' it, and still he's bent on believin' it's his duty to run and race, set up nights and buy bread for 'em, and do more than their own brothers would. I think it's all wrong to tug folks along as he does, but the mountains will open and swallow George, before he'll give up."

"He is one of a thousand, a man without parallel in goodness ; I dare not say he is wrong in any of his ideas, though we all know, had he studied his own interests he would be one of our law-

makers to-day. He would have made a splendid lawyer; we had a little taste of his ability in the city, he chanced to witness the arrest of a poor drunkard near the dock, one day, when we were down there on business, and became at once interested. When his business arrangements were complete, I went with him as he desired to the jail, and heard one of the strangest and most interesting of conversations between the poor fellow and Mr. Bean. In his own peculiar way he drew forth an almost graphic narrative of suffering, and want, caused by the appetite for strong drink, and when we left the cell, promised to be at the trial, which occurred in the City Court the following day. I accompanied him, and at his request omitted to introduce him to the judge, who is my personal friend.

The trial was nearly concluded and the judge about to pass sentence of imprisonment and fine, when, rising, Mr. Bean said :

“Your honor, I beg leave to state a few facts in extenuation of the grave charges, which are laid at our defenceless brother’s door. I am a stranger to your honor, but trust the presence of my friend, Mr. Woods, a sufficient guarantee to my sanity, and well meaning purpose,” and he bow-

ed gravely to the astonished judge who of course politely accorded him the favor asked.

Then followed a heart-touching appeal, the prisoner cried aloud, tears ran over the cheeks of the hard looking fellows, whose faces looked as if tear-forgotten. My own eyes were full, the astonished judge had a great deal of extra swallowing to do, and with the close of the most earnest and eloquent speech I ever heard, the judge clearing his throat, imposed the payment of costs of court only, upon the prisoner, this of course he was unable to meet, and without hesitation Mr. Bean arose.

“I will pay them, your honor ; our friend is not in condition to do it himself,” and putting his hand in his pocket, drew forth his wallet, which, to his astonishment, was not sufficient for the small sum required. “Ah !” he said, with a dubious expression, “I must have gotten the wrong wallet, I ought to have enough to pay that.”

Let me lend it to you, said Judge L., in a tone of pleasantry.

“Exactly, thank you sir ! and stepping forward he took the judge at his word, and received the money, while the court room was converted into a demonstration of hurrahs and hand clapping.

As we came out one poor old drunkard who is in

the lockup five days out of every seven, caught Mr. Bean's hand, and said with great anxiety :

“Come again, the city needs such as you, the drunkard's lawyer, sure that's what you are.”

I shall always regret that his lines have not been cast in places where with his legal ability, he could have distinguished himself, as he surely would, had his surroundings been conducive to such development.

When George returned, it was plain to all concerned that Abel was not to be left alone. George's bright eyes told the story, and he acknowledged that Simeon was to watch over him, until he was safely dreaming, and in the morning the birds who get up early, saw George go out of the gate and over the meadows, and across to Abel's, and heard him say, “I must exercise great care and supervision.”

CHAPTER XX.

THE NEWS of the accident had reached Hardy's Oven, and Rachel and Janey came over to Apple Rest, filled with fear, lest "Blue Ribbins" was badly hurt; bearing in their arms leaves, crisp and green.

George met them at the door.

"Hurrah! here is the priestess of Hyde, and the minstrel of Michigan is with her; now for a good time."

"Aye, Gaärge, ye looks as if ye had been wi' too good a time; is ye hurt bad, mi' dear? Janey an' me could rest no more, when we heerd o' the ride; how is it wi' ye, Gaärge?" and her blue eyes filled with tears.

"Oh! I am all right; my face has swelled during the night from the too forcible extraction of teeth; I picked out a small piece of my jawbone, a moment ago, and my head feels a little larger than usual; the blow on my forehead appears to have pretty much closed up one eye, but never mind me; let me introduce you to our professor of legality, Deacon Woods; this is our ministering sister, Rachel Hardy, from the land of the

pioneers; she came from the west, hundreds of miles, to find our eligible settlement, and is one of the greatest helps."

"Aye, how does ye do, sir," dropping a half courtesy, and extending her hand; Janey, love, shake hands wi' the gentleman, but away wi' more compliments, summat is to be done for these bruises—ye must be careful about the face. I hae brought summat," and throwing aside the sun-bonnet, she went to work with leaves and hot water, and soon had a bath ready, and insisted on binding large oak and walnut leaves on both face and forehead, throwing others into cold water and bidding him renew them every half hour.

"John 'Ardy brought us to crossing, and now he'es to soon taäke us awaäy. We'se to go to see the poor lad Bent, an' Vielit. I hae summat to do for both o' these," and she turned to go from the room, and then suddenly dropping into a chair, she looked at Mr. Woods a moment, and asked,

"Ha'e ye got a fever-sore?"

"I have," he replied, starting with surprise.

"I thowt so by the look o' the eye, an' you tries to heal it over, doesn't ye?"

"I do; it is a constant torment to me."

"Stop such foolishness; whoever thinks o' mak-

in' a bridge on the breast o' a dam fur a sure roaäd, gets hawful mistaäken. You're doin' it all wrong, and if the sore was betther treated, ye'll hae a betther stomach; oh! dear, dear! queer is the feelin's ye hae in your stomach."

"You surprise me, madam. I really cannot see how you know these things."

"Oh! I gets the love o' doctorin' people frae waäy back; an' the minute I gets eye on man or woman, I knaäws how they feels—all folks does, that loves to doctor, I think, but then I don't tell ye that I can doctor all; naw, there's summat inside o' me, a little spring o' common sense as tells me who I may do for, an' them, an' only them I tends to; but I say, mi' dear sir, if ye'll let me, I'll do ye graäte good—the more ye dams up this fire inside, the worse it is. Ye look strong, but John 'Ardy would tire ye i' three minits. Come an' let me cure ye, an' then take your bit o' a wife and go wi' me an' the gells across the sea. Gaärge telled us in letther, as ye hae a good wife, aye, an' he said ye hae a grand place, but snap-pit the fingers at all the pictures an' springin' seats if ye's sick. Will ye let me do it?"

"Certainly I will; and as I am going to board here until fall, with my wife, it happens nicely."

"Aye, but ye'll come to the Hoven."

“Yes, if I know I’m not to be roasted.”

“Aye, good for ye ; now I ’se off to see Vielit.”

“Well, when shall I see you again?”

“When I gets ready ; pretty soon mi dear ; come Janey, here’s feyther, and the wee white flower is waitin’, Gaärge, you ’s to do no friskin’ after the draäm drinkers while this day week. Hear, an’ obey,” and away she flew.

Mr. Woods was amazed ; looked as if a thunder-bolt had dropped at his feet, and awakened him too suddenly from the sleep of years. He rose, walked to the window, ran his hand through his hair, fumbled at his watch chain, looked out of the window, cleared his throat, and at last spoke.

“I declare this is a new experience ; a fever-sore is not an every-day occurrence with the majority, and as valueless as it is important ; still, I somehow feel to trust this woman—what a peculiar eye ; why, it seemed to me when I met her gaze, that she was ferreting out my entire life. She looks like a—I was about to say a witch ; that is too ungraceful a title ; but she certainly brought to me a feeling of smallness, such as I never before knew ; she seemed to me the master of everything ; I believe I am psychologized ; I do indeed.”

“No, you are not,” laughed George ; “the

woman is an incomprehensible compound of irrepressibilities. I understand that feeling, and from my close observation thus far, a perfect mistress of the art she practices. She is a natural botanist, bone-setter and physician, and last month, she performed a wonderful operation on a woman afflicted with cancer—burning it out with the sun-glass; an old town doctor witnessed it with myself. The potency of the sun's rays she understands perfectly; and the fact, also, at which I marvelled greatly, of their being styptic. She expressed it in her own way, re-assuring the patient, by telling her the sun couldn't kill her, for it shut every door it opened, leaving no crying arteries behind it. This is a wonderful fact; and the operation was marvellously successful; the sufferer is about the house in apparent comfort. You need not fear to trust her. I would risk my life with her any moment," and the added testimony of mother Charity and Millie Dean, gave a sort of relish to the confidence which, newly and strangely born, had filled the mind of Mr. Woods with conjecture. As to the construction of the physical, or its actual needs, he really knew very little, and when the thought by Rachel's strange and unwonted interest was awakened within, that perhaps this inherited humorous blood, filled as

it must be, with the desire for stimulant, might be gathered up and carried out of sight and contact, and with it die the curse that filled his life, he looked upon the light of a new star, whose beams of hope lay over the dark waters of his sorrow, and as the high swung light on shore, guides the mariner successfully to a haven of rest, the quiet harbor, where all his hopes shall anchor, so this one star lighted the farthest corner of his questioning soul, and he could hardly wait for the second coming of Rachel.

What a strange fact it seemed to Charity Chubbuck and Millie; and for that matter to all who knew the ins and outs, of white-hatted and white-souled George, that at his feet were constantly thrown the wrecks of men whose broken spars he gladly gathered; whose leaking lives he fought to save; and although many strayed from the path of duty, and forgetting to give due attention to the chart of their safety, dragged their grating keels on the sands of sin-commissions, George was never tired. All his best friends besought him, for his own good, but to the words of Aunt Patty, Mother Charity, and all, he turned a deaf ear, saying:

“Seventy times seven I have not as yet arrived at,” and sometimes feeling his lack of strength to

look on all sides at once, he would cry aloud, rehearse to them his favorite quotation and couplet,

“Truths would I teach, to save a sinking land,
All hear, none heed, and few can understand.”

“What manner of man he is, the ages must decide,” said Mr. Woods, “we are only sure he is working daily, early and late, and not for emolument, never receiving one-tenth of what he earns. I allow I cannot follow in his steps—he goes clear out of sight; distancing me ere I am ready to start; and then we find fault with him sometimes, too—which is a shame, and may God forgive us.”

George said no one must hear it, and yet how can one who knows, help telling of the one night which came during the first week of the Lawyer's stay, when he suddenly felt the hand clutching for his vitals; when his eyes were lured with light-like flame, and George sent Millie for Simeon in haste; how the poor man drew from his valise some strange looking wristlets, and said to George in a husky voice, “If necessary use them.” Who saw those great round tears that fell from George's eyes, as he took the manacles that were cold to the touch, and tenderly said, “No, no, we shall not need them;” ah! yes—who? Some one who never told of it before, and would not now, were

it not to prove the strength of love and power of the valiant friends who fought through the terrible night—when quarts of the strong hop tea that stewed away on the stove in the kitchen, were swallowed madly and without effect.

It was a strange, wild fancy that bounded him on every side, and George trembled ere it was over. In his hand he held the cruel wristlets; he would not call them handcuffs, for it hurt him, and looked sorrowful, and wonderingly, first at the victim, then at Simeon.

“Must we do it, Simeon?”

“I should say we must; my arms are growing weak; and if he arouses again as before we can never hold him.”

“It is mania potu at the start; oh! how he suffers.”

“Terrible,” said Simeon; see how tense every muscle of his frame is held; see how he quivers; he will soon spring from this fitful sleep; the power of opiate is nothing; have them ready.

Ah! what a picture that made; stretched at full length on his couch, lay the demon-possessed sufferer; his large and well built frame, with its thickly knitted muscles all visible, rising like so many long-ribbed seams under the quivering flesh—his lips compressed and bloodless by the tight-

ening of these throat-cords that ran under the jaw—eyes outlined by blood, which settled under and about them, and his broad, white forehead, resting, as marble, over the agonized face—his arms extended at full length, with the rigid fingers of each hand spread apart, he was like an iron man, all save the quiver, which ran with every movement over the muscles and through the nerves, causing his powerful breast to rise and fall like a surging sea.

Simeon stood beside him watching every breath, and ready for an emergency ; George at the foot of his bed, his hands behind him ; lest the eye of Mr. Woods should see what he held, for he might wake sane ; oh ! how he prayed that he would. Somebody heard it ; yes, those who are forever on the wing, sent by him who hears all our implorations ; hears and heeds our heart appeals.

Ten—twenty—thirty minutes ; the muscles grew less rigid—the breath came with less effort—the arms at first relaxed, with all their fingers, and then, oh ! yes, there was hope—hark, and look with your eyes riveted on the sleeper—see, the two men stand close together, there at the side of the bed, their heads inclined—their ears are strained to listen—he turns, his lips are parting ; oh ! the spasm of hell is over—see the beads of sweat

that rise on livid face and brow—hark ! closer bends a human ear ; he speaks slowly ; indistinctly and with effort, comes a guttural whisper from the parched and burning throat.

“ Mary—Cordial.”

Yes—George has it ready—he knows—the doctor told him, and in a little shell-shaped bowl, one of those old-fashioned tea-spoons, he passes a drop of life, to the lips of the exhausted man, who whispers again, “ more,” and opens his eyes to see the honest face of George. Simeon is sitting in a corner now, with his face buried in his hands—but he hardly realizes who he is, closes his eyes wearily, and dreaming still that Mary, his wife, is near, he whispers, “ Come and lie down Mary, take my hand—oh ! I am tired, tired, tired ; come.”

Let him cherish his delusion, thought George, and motioning to Simeon to go to rest in an adjoining room, he crept quietly over him, and taking his hand, the two drifted into unconsciousness. Simeon did not sleep—he heard the old clock say four, five, six, and then, with his head still full, made preparations to leave them, first ascertaining the perfect lucidity of Mr. Woods—and agreeing with George to return at night,

“Sure bind, sure find—come, if you are able to,” said George.

“Weak, but all right,” murmured Mr. Woods; “I am safely through the trial, Mr. Bean; thanks to you; God be praised!” and just then our blessed little Janey came tripping through the gate, her box of birds under her arm, and a flock of birds in her wake. She paused at the verandah steps and announced herself with a long, sweet strain from the violin, little dreaming that she stood under the window where lay this happy heart, this man new born, as he felt himself to be. He raised himself on his elbow to listen.

Never out of her place; always putting a finish on whatever occurred; she told the story of the future, playing to the souls of those who heard, and Mr. Woods, like all other human beings in trouble, took it all to himself, translating every strain, and fitting it to his great needs. Perhaps that is the right way—it seemed to George the child was heaven-born, and heaven-sent, always, and when her playing ceased, he gave to his friend the history of this little maiden.

Janey was born for friends, and when Mrs. Woods came from the city, which was only ten days after George's return, she was instructed to bring to Janey a handsome doll, a nice dress, and

bon-bons hitherto unknown to our artless darling—and then, man-like, Mr. Woods added in postscript:

“Get the prettiest rocking-chair you can find—never mind the cost, for she has earned more than we can pay. Would we could have had a little girl of our own—every one needs such bits of sunshine, to brighten life.”

Mrs. Woods was a timorous, sensitive woman. She almost shrank from Rachel at first, but her real goodness re-assured her, and hand in hand through the long summer, walked Hardy's Oven and Apple Rest, Squire Loomis' people, Simeon and Belinda; also, Abel Bent (on trial).

Happenings are not out of fashion; they are like winter and spring; always have been and ever to be, and bright suns of August reflected the shadowy forms of men who, with their armor of duty on them, walked to and fro, not seeking whom or what they might devour, no; perhaps it ought to have been told before, that Squire Loomis had presented to Blue Ribbons a building for use as a hall—the little school house was being outgrown, with a long list of names which accompanied a new invoice of men from the town lying due north, six miles exactly. George had measured it with a steel tape; by taking angles

along the route, and guessing at it, and last but not least, went over the road two or three times a week, and paced the distance both ways. He knew that it was six miles ; no more, no less.

It was this new hall that made the stir. They sanded the floor, and bought some new chairs and two or three long settees—a large arm chair for George himself, was contributed by Rachel, and just when September hung out her sign, and promises of fruit lay all about Apple Rest, while the berries grew black in the woods, and the reapers grew red in the sun, and Mr. Woods strong in himself, with Rachel on one side to mark his course, and meek-eyed, dove-like Mary at the other, whose thoughts kept tender chime with Janey's music—with Simeon taking long strides ahead in knowledge, and George, head and shoulders above them all, keeping the perfect poise of his individuality ; with all these conditions framing the faces of our friends, a first and full meeting in Loomis' hall was held—and the dedication song and chorus was launched into air by a chorus of many voices. Jed. and Violet were not there—the air was sort of sacred near them, and they kept each other's society through these days.

CHAPTER XXI.

MILLIE," said Mrs. Chubbuck, "I am going over to see Vilit, she feels miserably. I'm afraid for her safety ; the child has never been as well since her mother died. I want to go alone ; you don't care, do you ? I sort of feel as if she wanted to see me."

"Go, by all means ; but do not tell me Violet can die ; oh ! we could never, never, let her go ; and she has everything to live for ; she must not die."

"Death is not the worst thing in the world ; don't talk so ; it sounds rebellious."

It was a white face that was pressed against the pane, looking after Jed's retreating form, and thinking how handsome the face which turned lovingly back to look at her ; and, as he passed from sight, her face flushed with pleasure to see her dear aunt Charity coming near. She met her at the door.

"Oh ! I am so glad you are come ; did you know I wanted you ?"

I guess so ; "you've been in mind three days, steady, and I couldn't wait another minute."

“It is a nice time for us to see each other. Jed. has gone for his mother, who has been away two days, and I was mourning because I felt unable to go with him. Susan is here to wash dishes, &c., but come and sit close to me, where I can look right in your eyes.”

“You feel bad, don’t you Vilit? You’re as white as a ghost; all but them little pink spots on your cheeks, and they’re nothin’ but marks of bein’ excited because you was glad to see me. Tell me jest how you feel; and she took her hand.

“Oh! do not ask me to tell you just how I feel, for it will take so long; there are so many different feelings that arise and cover me, as it seems, that I could not tell you; but the whole of it is, that I have no strength, m^y limbs grow heavy, and my hands weak, daily. I think, perhaps I may be not so very far away from mother;” and she looked upwards, without tears, and no sign of sorrow, except the settled look upon her face that spoke her thought of leaving her young husband; and, as her eye fell, she said tenderly, “I feel sorry to leave Jed.; he will miss me more than the rest, though I know the good father and mother here, love me more than I ever dreamed they could, and you, and Millie, and George, and—

but never mind, it is only a little time ere we shall all meet again."

"Oh! Vilit, my poor girl, don't talk so; you ain't near dead; people feel that way very often."

"Yes, I know it may be I shall live; but if I stay or go, it is best I tell you all I want to. I have a box for you, and you only, which I shall give you to-day, and the key to it is not to be used until I go, no matter when it happens; will it trouble you to keep it? you are not curious."

Mrs. Chubbuck shook her head sadly.

"No, Vilit; but let me ask you a question. I believe you have set your mind on goin', and I really believe you'd rather go than stay; is it so?"

The blue eyes grew watery then, and she placed a hand over them, as if to shut out something; holding it there for some seconds, then she looked into the eyes of her good friend and answered:

"I believe it will be all right; I must say no more about it to you; now tell me all about Apple Rest and the new boarders," and with wonderful calmness she listened to Mrs. Chubbuck, and talked with her; and when Jed. and his mother entered, was as cheerful and happy as though she had not been an hour before so near the waters; near enough almost to feel their chill.

Mrs. Chubbuck went home sorrowful, and car-

ried no good news to Millie ; she held the box tightly in her hands all the way, and talked to herself of the poor child's last gift, and when fairly indoors and alone, gave vent to the bitterness within ; for, beside the thought of Violet's death was another, that of mystery, something undefinable, a shadowy fear that crept close to her, which she tried hard to banish ; "No, no," she said, "it cannot be, it is only her condition of mind and body, but after all the exorcism she could furnish, there was a blot falling on a stainless page, and a dim unreal, that brooded with her care through the sweet September days ; bright days were tinged with cloudy specks, and every prospect was touched, as by a grey, cold hand.

When school commenced, no singing teacher came on Wednesdays, which was a source of great regret to both teacher and pupils. Janey gained a position by this absence, which she would have willingly relinquished, could the face of their friend come among them ; but as it was, she took her seat beside George, and sat as sedately as a matron, entertaining them weekly for an hour, with the voice of her violin.

This was a treat to the children, and a rare sight to the many who came in, week after week on

Wednesdays, to listen to her. Mr. Woods desired to bring Janey into public notice, but Janey shrunk from the thought, and Rachel forbade such a plan; so there it ended; all except some private soirees at Mrs. Woods' house, where a rustle of silk and flutter of lace betokened the gathering together of the elite; those who were invited to witness her praiseworthy performances. Quoloty Nancy was invited to be present, and the flattering attentions paid her little sister, with the choice boquets and costly gifts lavished on her, quite overcame her prejudice against a girl fiddler, and was a large drop in Janey's overflowing cup.

. Earthly happiness is not always predicated on a lasting foundation, and hearts which had been flooded with pleasure, like lighted rooms, were becoming desolate and dreary tabernacles, where fear held its abiding place, and sorrowful glances were cast upon Violet from all sides; Squire Loomis and his wife were hoping against hope. George whispered tenderly, "a fading flower;" Millie went tearfully into the land of dreams each night, and Mrs. Chubbuck drew long sighs, and said nothing. Simeon and Belinda whispered together, and Jed., poor fellow, no one knew how to pity him, as with recurring days distressing

symptoms alarmed him more and more ; such a cough. It seemed to him as if it was a living being, this hacking in her throat that choked her so, and would not let her sleep, no matter what remedy was applied ; nothing did any good. Rachel, on whom they so depended, was powerless ; the old Doctor shook his head in a way that said, impossible, and told Mrs. Loomis, that the girl was consumptive born. Never was any one more beloved than this Violet, and the perfume of her presence seemed so necessary, that not one of her friends could say, "it is well." She knew and felt it all, and it held her to earth longer, and sad it is to think, it made her suffer more. They did not know it ; none save Rachel, who, when her eyes opened on this truth, that the desires of the people were pulling at the wings so longing to plume for flight, she walked right over to Mother Charity's and told her so.

"We'se to let go o' the blossom ; she's to go, an' we hurts her, draggin' her down to earth with a heavy weight ; aye, we'se to let her go, Mother Charity and Millie ; we can and shaäll." No word to Violet, but it relieved her, and she told them so. Thank you she said for trying to be comforted. It hurts one more than you know to be the cause of so much sorrow.

“It is a bitter, bitter mouthful,” said Mrs. Chubbuck, “but for her sake we must keep quiet ; it is but right ;” and every day found her over at Squire Loomis’.

When the first day of October came, there were hushed murmurs ; the old gig of the Dr. stood before the door for a long time.

With the coming of sunset came the going away of the gig and its occupant ; and up in Violet’s chamber, a little white face lay still and waxen. The baptism of life was foregone, and the bud was inanimate.

“Shall we tell her ?” they whispered ; then the eyes of Violet, more tired now than before, opened into the face of Jed., and her voice murmured :

“The baby is not alive. I knew it all the time ; but let me see it. I must kiss her ; do not feel worried darling ; it is no disappointment to me.”

They carried it to her, and she kissed the wee, small face, and they knew what she meant when she said, “Down in the garden, away down under the lilac tree ; cut off some curls ; pretty, pretty ;” and smoothing the silken, floss like rings of hair that crowned the little one, she closed her eyes. It was enough, and she was satisfied, and with her hand in Jed’s, whose presence she con-

stantly desired, she fell asleep; seeing not the two women who went carefully over the stairs with the little white draped sleeper, and then with Millie Dean, who waited for the turning of the tide, stood beside the doll-like dead, and wept together.

“My last hope is gone with this, and the child up stairs; why, why am I to be thus forsaken? God only knows my sorrow; and even He cannot help me; if he could, he would let my darling stay; oh! Mrs. Chubbuck, when Violet goes, if father and Jed. and I could lie down beside her, and go with her to the happiness which is denied us here, I would lift both my hands and rejoice. Father;” and she turned her streaming eyes toward heaven, “grant my prayer; thou knowest well, it is dark before us,” and Mrs. Loomis wrung her hands in an agony of sorrow.

The days ran on, and brought with them more strength to Violet than they dared to expect; she was able to sit in her chair, and all her dear friends went to see her. Janey carried over her box of birds, and played to her many days, and the old Dr. said there was hope; but it would be so much better if it were April instead of October; still, this was one of the most beautiful Octobers that Hyde ever knew; the death of the leaves was

glorious, and the warm, pleasant days, made one feel there was a mistake in the calendar. Violet was able to ride to Hardy's Oven and Apple Rest, and at the latter place she lay one long, full day on the lounge in the sitting room, with Jed. and Millie and Aunt Charity to watch over her. She took an early tea with them all, and when Jed. rolled her up in a shawl and lifted her into the carriage, she looked eagerly out at them, as good byes floated between, and spoke few words on her homeward ride.

The leaves were all gone from the trees, save now and then a few on the sugar maples, that loved to linger behind their fellows, and Violet a little weaker for a few days, looked wistfully out at her window. He was coming; he left her side only for a little while; Jed., whom she loved so well, and as his step sounded on the stair, she folded her hands tighter than usual; she was thinking, oh, so much to-day.

"My darling," and he gathered her in his arms; "are you tired?"

"Some tired, Jed.," and the fair head dropped on his shoulder; "bury me under the lilac, please, I am going away; oh! remember the promise; kiss me, Jed."

He pushed aside the wandering curls, raised

her face with his hand under the chin, kissed her lips; why, how cold they were! "Darling, he cried, Violet, oh! my wife; little mother, are you gone to the baby?" her head fell from his shoulder—she was dead; and sitting there as if powerless to move, he held the inanimate form, a full half hour, straining it to his bosom, and calling her fondest names, unmindful of aught save the great need he felt of her love, her presence, her voice. His mother came quietly up the stairs, opened the door softly, lest she might disturb their loved one; but at sight of Jed.'s face, and the form in his arms, went hurriedly forward, saying, "Is she feeling badly?"

"Oh!" said the stricken Jed., "oh! dead! dead! dead!"

"No, no," she answered; but the cold, clammy forehead, the poor, limp arms, yes, everything repeated, dead! dead!

"My poor boy; oh! our Violet; can we live without her? why did you not call me? we must lay her on the bed, and send Susan for Aunt Charity; let me help you."

"No, no, mother, let me hold her longer, she loved to be here; she nestled down in my arms to die; she put her lips to mine, and then hid her sweet face on my breast; let me hold her, it was

her last desire that I should hold her close. I have called her so long, and she never before refused to answer, how can she be so dead? cold and cruel is the hand that killed her; oh! I hate death; hate it from this hour; we want her so; we need a breathing Violet, not this pale, cold flower; oh! my wife, my little mother, wake! for God's sake speak! I call you, my darling; and he folded her tighter to his heart, which o'erflowed with the bitterness of human agony.

His mother crept quietly down stairs, and hurried Susan over to Mrs. Chubbuck's, bidding her speak to Mrs. Loomis on the way.

Poor untutored Susan; her's was a sad task, for she loved so well the sweet, young wife, that no task would have been too great for her to have undertaken, and to think she must leave them; she ran bonnetless and shawless, thinking of nothing, save the news she had to carry. She met Mr. Loomis and George at the cross roads, just a little way from the house, and half breathless, she exclaimed, "She's dead, oh! she's dead," flying past them as if hurried. George's wail was heart-rending, only hurrying her forward to Mrs. Chubbuck's where, when her message was delivered, she sank to the floor, and cried and moaned aloud:

“We mustn’t stop now ; there’s work to do, and at once.”

Grief and time had strengthened mother Charity, and she was able to firmly close her lips and walk resolutely forward to the work before her.

“Come, Millie,” she said ; “you’d better go, Vilit would want you to do it,” and with trembling hand, the mourning Millie combed and arranged the curls about the face and over the forehead of the sleeper, thinking, as she did so, no flower as sweet as she would yield again a perfumed breath.

When Jed. yielded his burden, he went down to the lilac tree and, on his knees, besought strength to bear his sorrow. It was a stony look that settled with its calmness upon him, and he moved and breathed like a machine ; not until the day of the burial, when he realized that never again this face of clay could warm with life, when he stood beside her with a last, long, hungry look falling upon her, were the waters of the fountain unsealed.

“Do not hurry him,” whispered his mother ; “leave him with his own a little while,” and he was left.

“Alone with my beautiful dead,” he cried ; “alone with the speechless lips and the innocent

face of her who trusted me, I, who am not worthy. Oh! my Violet, do not go so far away that I shall never be heard or seen. God help me to be worthy of your help! but now, now, ah! yes, now is the last kiss; good-bye, and if you do not look upon me until the time I shall go out to find you, watch for me; meet me then; good-bye, oh God! this is too hard," and he staggered backward, as if reeling from a heavy blow. George came and stood beside him, and arm in arm the two walked down to the lilac tree together, and there beside the little mound they raised another, and above the two a pure white shaft, with this inscription, "Our Violets."

After the last service that could be rendered the body was given, in the farm house of Squire Loomis, sat the bereaved trio, also Simeon and Belinda, who offered to stay with them, during the first days of their loneliness.

"It may be foolish to make you the trouble; nothing can help us really to bear our sorrow, save the help which comes to us from on high, still your friendship is blessed, and perhaps Jed. will forget a little more, if we do not sit down alone; yes, do stay."

At Apple Rest sat three only. Angels must find it hard to know which of the three loved Vio-

let best; it must be they were adjudged equal worshippers at the shrine of her worth, and the manifestation each individual heart made had been genuine from the first; but to one of these a secret had been intrusted. Mrs. Chubbuck had opened the box which Violet gave her, and what did it contain? Some little keep-sakes of her old friend, Violet's mother; lace for a cap finely wrought by the deft fingers, now so cold and still, and last, but not least, a long letter to Aunt Charity, and a tender note for George.

The last sentence in Mrs. Chubbuck's letter were the saddest of all, and read so like a message from beyond.

“Now that I am gone, let me whisper to you what none, save yourself and our good George, must know; life has its secrets, and with me, death also. I could not have lived, dear Aunty; no, I have been dying slowly ever since the cruel blow that so nearly took me from you. It was not the coming of our little one that took me from earth; no, my heart-beats were painfully slow; consumption of both nerve and blood carried me farther from our earth-shore daily; do not let Jed. believe I could have lived, no, no; nothing could have saved me, and it is too bad I ever let him love me so, only for the sake, perhaps, of

calling my soul nearer to earth, where I can hear him cry, for oh ! my more than dear Aunt Charity, he will need all the help you can give him ; all the pity angels can bestow. Do not ever curse him ; he cannot help it ; poor Jed. ; nothing can make him less dear to me, and the appetite which I fear will grow with years, is the bane of an inheritance ; a cruel curse ; if our loyal Blue Ribbons can only stay near him, and you can, with your love and prayers, keep him within reach of your strong sympathy, he may be helped to keep whole. Please give to George the inclosed note, and tell not my dear Millie, lest she feel bitter. Remember it is I, your Violet ; your soul-freed Violet, who asks this favor.

“ Lovingly,

“ VIOLET LEAVITT LOOMIS.”

And George’s note was so like her, too, a touching, tender appeal, which only said :

“ MY DEAR BLUE RIBBONS :

“ Let the love which fills your heart’s dear room, hold close my Jed. Bind about him the silken reins of your untiring sympathy and help, and oh ! if he should fall, please raise him, for, indeed, his soul is white as alabaster, and to him

is due, eternal forgiveness. Be to him the true, just friend, whose arm has saved so many.

“God, who has shapen and molded you for this glorious work, will give you strength sufficient for each day, and his blessing will cover you, in the world where you and I will meet again.

“YOUR GRATEFUL VIOLET.”

“Do not let the children at the school house forget me.”

CHAPTER XXII.

BLUE Ribbons is lonesome ; Mother Charity is cloudy through the days, an' all's too sad wi' the beautiful one so dead," and poor little Janey held her face in her hands and cried, away in the leafless woods alone. "Robins is gone awa' she sobbed ; there's naw music in the box, but a bit o' a chipper, as just maäkes me cry the more ; an' poor Jed. lad, when he comes to see me, puts arms around me close, an' cries the tears, an' tells me, oh ! she's gaäne so far, we'se never to hae her back ; oh ! deary dear ! an' sometimes Janey thinks she'd rather ha' had naw Vielit ; then naw tears'd hae to come. It's bad to waäte so long for birds, but not so bad as Vielit ; birds eyes'll com wi' spring ; but Vielit's never, never !" and the bare oak arms swayed in the wind, as sob after sob came from her convulsed frame, and she wept till quite exhausted.

That one long, blissful summer had given birth to wondrous happiness ; and now her sun was hid in darkness, and she sought vainly for relief, which came at last through her music, and fitted her, as everything did which she accepted.

It was in the little school house, one of the playing afternoons, as she called them, that with her half-closed eyes, she seemed to see Violet's face, as it was in the days gone by. The hand of recollection drew first the shadow of the face, and as the lids instinctively closed upon the vision, it grew as real as life; and when the music hour was over, she whispered to her teacher:

“I waäynt cry any more; Vielit lives somewhere, just in herself, wi' the saäme blue eyes; an' she looked to Janey's face to-day; I'se glad.”

No more tears of sorrow. The sweet face lured her from the shadow, and the dearer the music, the nearer the face. She told all her friends, who were only too glad of her smiles, re-born. Pure waters reflect clearly, while older hearts and wiser heads, dwelling nearer the turbid river of change, saw not this memory picture as Janey saw it. It belonged to her; and was her own true comfort. Each heart knoweth its own bitterness, and also how the victory is won.

The work of temperance went bravely on, though no hands were as strong as those of George; and to him, as by common consent, all the hard cases were consigned; he that will do, may do; his reward was insufficient to satisfy another, and he committed many an injustice to

himself, which all knew was wrong ; still, his courage knew no change, and upon one of their annual meetings, when by reason of eloquent appeals to the sin-cursed, wrath pursued inebriates, the audience were moved to repentant and sympathetic tears, one poor old man, the most hopeless of them all, went up to the desk and said, give me the pen, Mr. Bean, I'll try once more. George told the lecturer, on their way home, that the signature of that one sot was pay enough for anybody.

What an original design George Bean must have been made from ; no second pattern entered the world during the century in which he lived, which made it all the harder for George, and all the more glorious, too.

“Changes never come single handed,” remarked Mrs. Chubbuck, when Violet passed from sight, and one blessed circle of friends will be all cut up. Her words were true ; for, more than half the time George was in the city of Duke, and the work which lay before him, indicated that such would continue to be the case.

Poor Jed. could not be content at home, and went away from home and friends to forget his sorrow among strangers. He fought bravely, obtained an honorable position, and for a time the sky of human prospects lay clear, over him.

Lawyer Woods was a new man, and every summer found him in Hyde ; from Apple Rest to Hardy's Oven, and back, the line of his vacation lay, and Loomis' hall echoed to the sound of his voice, which he raised in appeal against the destroyer of peace. He never told how many dollars went from his pocket to furnish a fund suitable for the establishment of an inebriate home ; still that was not so important as to know it was done, and more, to realize that hundreds of victims have been lifted from their degradation up into the light of day.

Squire Loomis left a legacy to it, which, unfortunately, was never received.

Who forged those notes and took the Squires' property, does anybody know ? and where was Jed. ? yes, where ?

The white slab, "Our Violets," looks lonely ; for, with the lapse of years, such changes rolled across the sea, and months before the gun of Sumter spoke, Rachel and John, with the three 'gells,' and Mr. and Mrs. Woods, were together on the deck of an outward bound steamer. George went down to see them off, and waved his white hat as they left the dock. Janey shaded her eyes with her hand, and cried, "good bye the best o' all," and Rachel called,

“Fare ye well, Blue Ribbins, we’s to be back while time. Keep the track o’ ’Ardy’s Hoven; fare-ye-well.”

The eyes of all were full of tears, and Mr. Woods, who had vainly entreated George to go with them, said to his wife:

“I feel as if he were my brother.” She pressed his arm, and whispered:

“More than a brother; we shall never forget.”

Millie Dean Stanley was in Apple Rest at that moment, with her husband and one little girl, and in a rocker sat mother Charity, grown too tired to do much about the house; she was Mr. and Mrs Stanley’s comfort, and the baby’s “dammer Chubby,” and as the days went on, she sat with the mantle of peace which she herself, through deeds of love had wrought, covering her in pleasantly falling folds. A comfort to herself and others, she often lifted her eyes and said, “Father I thank thee, and wait in peace the tide that bears me out to sea, over the path of waters; by-and-by my boat will follow in the track of Nehemiah’s and Vilit; yes, by-and-by,” and the baby in her arms would wonder at the two or three tears which fell, and with her little fingers wipe them away, and wonderingly say:

“You’s a dood dammer, don’t ’ky, nobody won’t hurt dammer Chubby.”

“No, you little blessed ; grandma’s only thinking.”

There was no help for it ; Hyde had to grow ; and farther and farther into the woods went the mark of newly awakened trade, and the forest echoed the ring of the woodman’s axe ; some grumbled and glowered ; others whistled and smiled, at a prospective chance of driving a sharp bargain for the town. Among the latter was Deacon Rayne ; after his wife’s eyesight failed her, and he was obliged to have some one at the house, to do both in and out of doors ; run after chickens, milk cows, and keep both them and the pigs from the vegetable garden, make butter and cheese, and do according to the deacon’s catechism, handy work, he found great cause for complaint. “Nobody does half nor quarter what she did ;” that was true ; the hired girl never thought of being called on to mow away hay, shell all the corn, &c., &c., too numerous to mention ; she was wise enough to know that this work belonged to the men, and took one dollar and twenty-five cents per week for her services as readily as if she earned that enormous sum, Deacon Rayne to the contrary, notwithstanding. All these serious annoyances and extra expenditures made, with the fact of his wife’s blindness, which

was pronounced lasting, had the effect of conditioning him to receive an offer from the town, and the old still was sold, torn down, and its site graced by a large factory building, for the manufacture of clocks.

Millie's husband was foreman in one of the rooms, and Apple Rest was the same dear little nest through years; all save the decapitation of a few old trees; but the stumps which were left held more, and were artistically utilized, and became large myrtle-laden cups, the long vines gracefully draping the wooded sides, and the one which stood nearest the verandah, held in its center clumps of blue violets. Millie called it the "memory cup."

George grew to be almost entirely in the city and his seasons of refreshment at Apple Rest, were always delightful to all parties concerned.

"He'll bring us some story of his goodness; his almost foolish goodness to folks, but ain't it strange where Jed. is? if he'd been here, he'd have had a good property; yet before I die, Millie, I mean to tell you what I think about them big debts of Squire Loomis'. It was dretful strange everything got swept away, and the Squire so straight a man; no will, no nothing; hem!"

Hardy's Oven could not be left intact ; a street was demanded through the woods directly back of the Oven itself, and the demand must be met.

George wrote to Rachel, who finally answered.

“Sell it, and take a hundred dollars for your trouble ; put it in the bank, an' keep it agin a rainy day.”

“That is like our sister,” said George, brief, and with a significant emphasis. I will do as she says, for, there may be necessity of my having a little more money.”

Simeon's cottage became a pleasant country seat, and was occupied by the happy hearts, through the summer.

Mrs. Chubbuck and Millie missed them through the winters ; still, the printed speeches of Simeon, and the fact of his strong, earnest work, which became so much a part of him, that even those strongest opposed to him in sentiment, could not fail to admire the fearless Congressman, comforted them in their loneliness.

It was remarkable that he should have taken such long strides ; very true, but whoever became truly, really great, that had not a history.

Presidents are rarely born in palaces, and humble homes and early hand to hand struggles, with conditions of varying shades, may be rehearsed, regarding others beside Simeon.

Born of conditions, subject to them as the hands that hold our fate, the right word, right aid at the right time saved him, and long live Simeon.

CHAPTER XXIII.

SNOW, snow, everywhere; white flakes, large and soft, and looking before they touched our faces warm as eider-down; but how deceptive appearances. It was the coldest, most unsatisfactory April that was ever known, many people declared; it seemed as if nature had borrowed man's caprices; for in March she gave promise of opening her great heart, and with the death of the frost, allow her brown breast to be drilled by deep ploughed furrows, delighting the ambitious farmer, for whom she could not smile too early, and then, just as hope grew warm in the breast, up came the breath of a strong north wind, freezing anew the broken earth, making hard, uneven traveling; roads full of miniature thank-you-marms; and then, as if it were not enough, let fall a sleety rain, that glazed everything over with a crust so dubiously formidable to comfortable locomotion, and after this second lesson, on came the third, and snow, piled up in the clouds and down on the earth.

“Well, well,” said George, who rarely ever thought of weather, “no work here until this

storm is over. I think I will betake myself to the home of my boyhood, with its many graves, and its few old faces left to greet me."

It was toward dusk that he entered Hyde, entering Apple Rest in good time for supper, and he was right welcome.

"Is there any good news for me to hear; can you tell me of any one who has registered an old or a new one, on our roll of honor; has Blue Ribbons cause to flutter around?" he asked.

"I can't say as there's anything to tell, except we've got a letter from Rachel, and she is coming to see us. I'm glad I shall live to see her, and I expect I shall—no new converts to your cause, I guess. Folks are getting slack, ther're drove to death with workin' so; seems to me they work harder and enjoy less all the time."

After the supper was over, George thought of something to go up town, as they called it now, for; it used to be across the lots, or over to the cross-roads. He desired to see the Postmaster.

"I shall return immediately," he said as he vanished.

"Wall, don't forget it, George; I hain't forgot your old capers;" at which he laughed and answered:

"Amen, and so be it;" and went on his way,

under the starless, moonless sky, singing the hymn, "Oh happy day that fixed my choice," while down in his heart lay mirrored faces of distress, framed in a cloud, whose longing eyes haunted George day and night; and leaving his verse unfinished, he buttoned his coat about him, pulled his hat farther on to his head, stepped with a firmer tread, as out ran the thread of his thought, on air.

"Something must be done. A man, a live man, who should stand erect and firm among his fellows, penned in a narrow cell, six by eight feet in dimensions, dark and dismal, and wholly comfortless. Three years nearly, he has breathed the agony laden air, and now, now, before him lies three more. He is not a villain, his heart is tender; oh! that he had less flinty hearts to deal with—men of steel. Twice I have sought his freedom, and they have repelled me. He did it, and he shall suffer; so saith the law." I say he did *not* do it; the demon drink was the life which prompted him; he was irresponsible in that hour; oh! I must get him out; out into the sunlight; out into the air; and into the presence of his wife. Oh! how that woman suffers; and then, when he comes out repentant and sober, who will help him? we will trust. God help me to touch

the heart of the brother to whom I am going for assistance ;” and he looked upward, taking a long step forward.” Oh ! he stumbled and nearly fell, as he turned the corner—what was it a heap of—of—what ? a man—“Good heavens,” he cried, and knelt beside this human bundle. “Who is this ?” he said, “what in the world can it mean ?”

It was an old camlet cloak that covered the frame, whose knees were drawn up to the chin, the cape of the cloak muffling head and face like a hood.

George drew the cape away, trying in vain to distinguish the features ; had the moon shone on them, he could have done so. “Poor fellow, poor fellow, your hands are cold ; but there is a little life in them ; I can feel a pulse ; let me see if I can raise you by putting my hands under your shoulders ; brother, brother, can you speak to me ?”

A low moan escaped the lips.

“Are you hurt, my friend ? tell me if you can ; perhaps you know me.”

“Oh !” came from the lips.

“I’m George Bean ; trust me, tell me who you are and where we shall go. I will take you to your home.”

“George ? George ?”

“Yes, George Bean; do you know me?”

“Y-e-s.”

“Tell me your name; I do not recognize the voice.”

“J-e-d.”

“Jed. Loomis? oh! my poor boy, is this you? I must get some one to take you to Sister Chubbuck’s.”

“No, no, to the lilac tree,” he said.

George was sitting on the cold ground beside him, holding him up and waiting for help to get him out of the wind, and off from the frozen earth.

“We must go to Sister Chubbuck’s first, and let you get rested.”

The head was growing very heavy on the friendly shoulder, and George could not afford to wait for help; but he had to, nevertheless—and every moment seemed an hour. At last there was some one near, and his heart beat gladly. Poor Jed. spoke, and a strange thrill ran through his frame; George felt it, and listened to the words that slowly and painfully fell.

“To the lilac tree—they are here; Violet’s face and Janey’s music—heaven—home; oh! take my hand.”

The hand he raised to his Violet, and the head

on George's shoulder fell at the same moment, and nearer came the help so needed.

"Hasten," said George, "and help a fellow mortal." Rough, but kind of heart—"who is he?" the stranger said.

"It is young Loomis, only son of the honored old Squire; he is dead."

"Dead; what can we do with a dead man?"

"We must take him to the nearest store, or some place where we can inform the authorities of the town, and decide what is to be done."

"All right. I am a strong man, and better take hold of him right under the shoulders—you come here; I guess I know who you are. You're Prof. Bean, ain't you?"

"I think I am," replied George. This man little knew how hard a thing it was to feel that his well loved Jed., the one for whom he had so long sought in vain, lay dead in the streets, and all for the poisonous cup. George never forgot that night, nor the sorrow that touched the cup of joy at Apple Rest, when he carried the news.

"Oh! oh! oh!" said mother Charity; "to die in the streets, how he must have suffered—bring him here—right into the front room let him be laid. Millie, we must, we wan't to do it, don't we; and, George, be sure they bring the old cloak

with him. His mother give it to him when he went away ; told him it would be handy for him to have in a boarding-house ; to keep in his room ; to throw on to his bed, and round him, if he should be sick in the night ; I heard her say it. Yes, he was sick in the night, and you did want it ; oh ! you poor, poor, poor boy, and all I can do for Violet, all I can do is to kiss him, and cry ; but we'll bury him, and we'll say no harsh words. You said his soul was white ; you ought to know," and Mrs. Chubbuck wept not alone ; for how could any one look upon the sleeper, whose face was prematurely old ; whose hair was so profusely streaked with grey—not one of all who came, and they were many, but looked on the face and read the silent, but powerful sermon.

The funeral service was tender and impressive ; and the homeless, houseless wanderer, was not friendless.

From the kind and appreciative heart of the aged minister, to the tears in the eyes of the least among them, ran a genuine feeling, like a tide on which the barges of their thought floated down together ; if the harsh judgments held their place, they came as an after part, and not as an interference with the sacred friendship of the hour.

"Well," said George, with eyes nearly blinded

by tears ; it is all over ; we have buried our brother, who has been sacrificed on the altar of appetite ; and that altar was builded by human hands.

We may not say how far individuals who hold kinship with him, were to blame for this ; we cannot know more than the fact that he was born with the mark upon him ; that he knew it ; that his parents prayed long and earnestly, from the moment they realized this strong, dark fact. If the hour was too late, we cannot say, but this much we do know ; that if all hearts were alive, he would not have been suffered to die in the street, and alone.

“The suffering in his last days was terrible—here in my hand I hold a letter, written on the verge of his last delirium, just when he received the blinding blow that sent the present out from under his feet, and carried his weak, confused brain back to his home, the babe and wife. Thank God for the testimony it brings to me, that his soul was, as the flower said in her note to me, ‘white as alabaster.’ Ah ! yes, this mantle of physical degradation only covered the spirit. Hear what he says : the picture is retrospective, and a foreshadowing of his fate.”

“My precious blue-eyed “Forget-me-not,”
My own flower Violet,

“You have gone and left me, gone to find our little one, whose eyes opened only on heavenly things; our darling, but not ours; you have gone to find her in the babe’s heaven, for you know your heart is so pure, your soul so white, that you can enter there, and be with her. You told me to hold you, and kiss you, Violet, and I knew you meant for me to go in with you, but mother and Aunt Charity came and took you out of my arms; they would not wait for me to get away from myself, and so I have waited—waited a long and dreary week. It has seemed years, and I cannot wait any longer; now I am going first to the lilac tree, to leave that dark part which confines my better self, and, oh! Violet, wife, little mother, will you and our heaven-breathed baby come, and help me through to where you are.

“God help her to come; let my Violet hear my call—the call of her poor imprisoned Jed., who will soon be free and in heaven, in your heaven; oh! my Father, safe, and at rest; no more pain—no suffering—no eating—no drinking—nothing but our Violets, and all that is beautiful; with music floating round us there, more sweet than Janey’s.

“Good by, mother and father, it is better for me to go and find her.

“JED.”

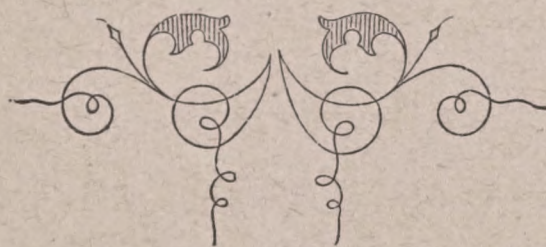
George rose and paced the floor—his eyes dilated with thought; “oh!” he cried, “can we stand it? can the hearts of men remain as cold and unrelenting as steel itself; when we hold in our hands so powerful a weapon as this. It is proof of what I say—rum drinking is a disease, and must be treated as such. The victim needs the same help and watchful care, that is given to those who are subject to epilepsy, or like sicknesses; we need men and women who shall be especially fitted, by an educative process, to care for these among us.

“Jed. was a jewel; here is the record of rum’s work with his senses; the ineffaceable record of its blighting, stultifying effect. It inundates thought, drowning the part that would fain progress—over and over again these tides of hell flooded the home of flesh, until at last the structure, whose foundation was, without his desire, laid on the quicksands, gave way, and down into the raging waters he was carried, oarless and strengthless, over the dam of its maximum fury he was carried, and here at our feet the last vestige of his earthly wreck was cast. *What shall we do?* To me,” and he paused in his walk—“*To me, I say, it is a cry for help; a voice from the deep—a wail that comes to my ears over the*

waste of waters, from the wreck, the shattered, crying wreck of a God-made man,—God give me strength to answer," and, with his arms upraised, and eyes fixed in their expressed gaze, he drew long breaths, as filling with his thought he stood before his listeners, whose hearts were touched with wondrous power; his lips parted, and the words that fell with trembling emphasis, were strong with his aroused feeling, and revealed the latent fire that kept alive the daily work of the fearless expounder and practicer of truth. In that hour he seemed lifted above his fellows, and those who watched, with tearful eyes, and listened with beating hearts, knew not the homeliness of his garb, saw not the stray locks of hair through which his restless fingers ran, neither dreamed that his feet were shod with coarse-grained coverings; they only knew his heart; his soul; his purpose; warm with life, and burning with sincerity, the flames of the sacred fire within glowed on the walls of their appreciating sense, and they with him breathed love and prayer, as in his great soul-heartedness he swept the path before him clean, even to the very skies; his hands, clasped now before him, one single tear rolled down beneath each eye, and his voice, like harp-strings, tender, and like wind-waves strong,

threw out upon the tide of thought the challenge of his soul ; men and angels heard, and men and angels know and can testify how well he kept this word ; this white word of his uttered testimony.

“Our friend and brother, (speak it low, he said), the pride of our village, hath been slain. He who hath slain him will I slay, for he is my enemy, and his name is RUM ! his victims are legion, and his strength Herculean ; still may I hope and not despair, for if God be for me, who can be against me ? Oh ! ye rocks of Hyde, cry aloud, and ye, oh ! mountains, tremble. Waken the slumbering people to their peril, and help me to be JED’S AVENGER !”





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